

# STATE

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April 2014

# MAGAZINE

**Keepers of the Seal**  
Presidential Appointments  
Office Plays Unique Role

**Environment Advocates**  
Eco-diplomacy Focus of  
OBO Green Embassy Guide



## *Dance Outreach*

Cultural program  
uses dance to unite  
Honduran youths

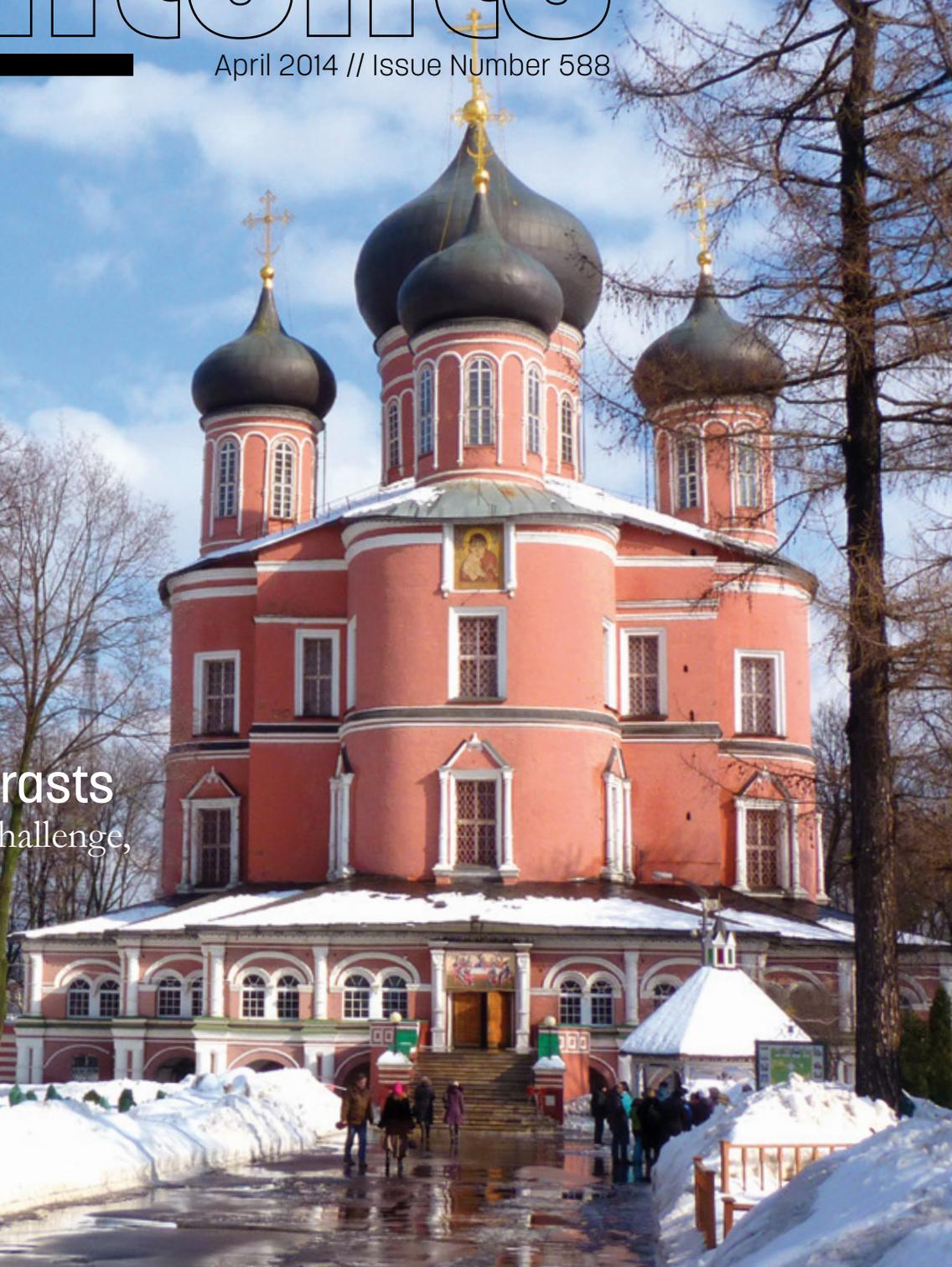
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## City of Contrasts

Moscow offers challenge,  
cultural riches



The Donskoy Monastery is reflected in a wet walkway on a sunny winter day.  
*Photo by Mark Meyer*



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## On The Cover

The Dance Theater of Harlem performs in Honduras during an embassy sponsored tour.  
*Photo by Daniel A. Durazo*

# Post One

BY ISAAC D. PACHECO

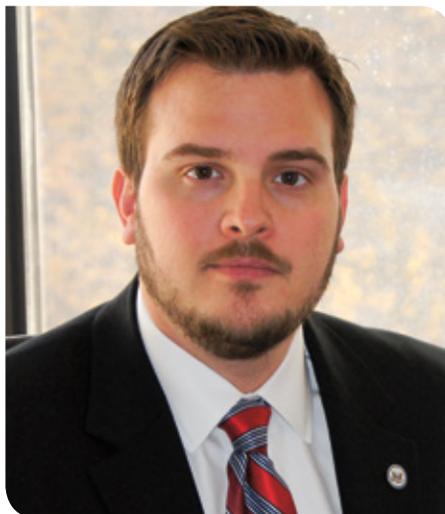
## A Delicate Dance

Every posting abroad comes with unique challenges. Cultural differences, geographic boundaries, environmental issues and sociopolitical affairs all shape the Foreign Service experience, as does the state of the bilateral relationship. A bilateral relationship in which candid views are exchanged is a key to successful engagement.

Employees at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, this issue's Post of the Month, are keenly aware of the dynamics that hold sway over diplomacy in a host nation. It is ironic that Embassy Moscow's first appearance as Post of the Month—a selection made months ago for a feature that focuses on the highlights of serving at a particular post—coincides with the flare-up in tensions in Eastern Europe. However, it also serves as a prime example of how dynamic international diplomacy is, and how Department employees often have to make the most of challenging situations.

The embassy team is tackling a multifaceted suite of issues in Russia, a nation with which the United States has worked diligently to build upon common interests despite historically complex relations. Notwithstanding the contentious state of affairs between the two countries, the officers and staff at Embassy Moscow have exemplified professionalism, and sought creative ways to overcome obstacles between them and their mission.

A posting at Embassy Moscow not only provides challenging, career-enhancing opportunities for Foreign Service officers seeking to strengthen their portfolios and work on issues with far-reaching significance, but is also a chance to explore a vibrant city. Beyond its cultural treasures—Red Square, St. Basil's Cathedral and the Bolshoi Ballet among others—Russia's capital features a variety of interesting activities for individuals and families alike. Check out our feature article (pg. 22), which looks at the bounty of opportunities available for those who serve at Embassy Moscow.



Speaking of ballet, the U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa recently hosted 21 members of the Dance Theatre of Harlem as part of a cultural outreach program meant to inspire Honduran youths. The ECA Arts Envoy Program-sponsored event took place during Black History Month, and highlighted African Americans' contributions to the fine arts.

The dancers worked with a diverse group of youths from underserved communities, leading a series of workshops, master classes and performances that emphasized collaboration and inclusion. The troupe also conducted auditions, from which 10 local youths were selected to join the company in a special performance.

This issue's cover story (pg. 14) takes an inside look at Embassy Tegucigalpa's successful cultural outreach program, and shows how the arts have a unique and subtle way of bringing even the most disparate communities together. The embassy and Dance Theatre of Harlem used dance to unite youths from different social, economic and racial backgrounds in a shared passion, and in the process laid the groundwork for lasting collaboration. ■

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Isaac D. Pacheco". The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a white background.



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#### Deadlines

The submission deadline for the June issue is April 15. The deadline for the July/August issue is May 15.

*State Magazine* (ISSN 1099-4165) is published monthly, except bimonthly in July and August, by the Bureau of Human Resources at the U.S. Department of State. It is intended for information only and is not authority for official action. Views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of State. The editorial team reserves the right to select and edit all materials for publication.

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Using its keen eyesight and lightning-fast reflexes, a great egret (*Ardea alba*) snatches a minnow out of a freshwater creek running through the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge on Assateague Island, Va.

*Photo by Isaac D. Pacheco*

# In the News



Sarah Jarrett, OMNI Television's supervisor for Community and Viewer Relations, gives Toronto's consular Section a studio tour.

Photo by Maxwell Harrington

## Consular Outreach Builds Ties

Three posts that are part of Consular Team Canada—Toronto, Québec City and Ottawa—observed Consular Leadership Day in January with activities that highlighted how communication is essential to good consular management and critical to the Department of State's success.

On Jan. 15, Toronto's consular section staff visited the studios of OMNI Television, Canada's first free over-the-air multilingual/multicultural television system, which broadcasts 60 percent of its programming in more than 15 languages other than English. While OMNI had already interviewed Nonimmigrant Visa Officer Jingping Lai three times for its recent Mandarin and Cantonese programming, the consular section expects the visit to result in even closer collaboration. Toronto staff also invited OMNI staff to tour the consulate and

do a story on visa processing ahead of Canada's busy summer season.

On Jan. 17, Québec City's consular staff traveled to the nearby port of entry (POE) in Jackman, Me., to meet Port Director Tim Lacasse, talk with Customs and Border Protection supervisors, and tour the large POE facility that opened in 2010. The visit should improve communication with the consulate's counterparts at POE Jackman, where most of the border issues involving individuals from Québec City's consular district originate.

At Consulate General Québec City, staff heard Principal Officer Hale VanKoughnett speak on how differences in cultures and customs present obstacles in communication to Foreign Service officers and local staff. On Feb. 7, Ottawa's consular section held ethics training on the problems certain U.S. consular sections

have encountered because of malfeasance. The section also adopted four goals for the coming months, including reducing wait times for NIV applicants, formalizing an improved NIV adjudication process, and conducted team-building exercises.

Toronto and Ottawa also focused on 1CA, the Bureau of Consular Affairs' endeavor to use a shared approach to leadership, management and innovation across the bureau, so that it can operate as a global enterprise with a shared mission and common business culture in an environment of budgetary austerity and increasing demand for its services. Both consular sections conducted balance exercises, where staff discussed their performance in the management of people, processes, customers and finances. Toronto's staff also received a 1CA Toolkit training session via a digital videoconference.

# Women's Program Promotes Negotiation



The audience listens as the FWP panel discusses gender differences in negotiation.

Photo by Shanthini Watson

The Federal Women's Program (FWP) at the U.S. Consulate General in Rio de Janeiro recently explored the issue of gender differences at the negotiating table in a panel discussion on women in negotiation. The panelists were Karin Breitman, general manager of the R&D Center at EMC Brazil; Valeria Rossi, public and government affairs manager at ExxonMobil; and Gabriella Icaza, former president, American Chamber of Commerce in Rio de Janeiro.

The moderator, Robert Miller, a lawyer and co-founder of the Coursis consulting group, opened the discussion by citing a 2011 McKinsey and Company study that found that women are often evaluated on performance, while men are evaluated on potential. To overcome this workplace inequity, Rossi said women need to learn to negotiate to their full potential.

Breitman advised women to "imagine that they are negotiating on behalf of another person that they care about, like their child or partner." She said women tend to possess different skill sets than men and should leverage these skills at the negotiation table. For example, women tend to be more empathetic, and can take advantage of this ability to predict the other side's next move.

Icaza said being prepared and being ready to act was paramount. She shared experiences from her career in Brazil in the 1960s at JP Morgan, when it was rare for women to be in the workplace, particularly in finance.

# Embassy's 'Saunic Boom' Team Competes in Estonia

An American team led by Ambassador Jeff Levine represented the U.S. Embassy in Tallinn in the 5th annual European Sauna Marathon in Estonia's "Winter Capital" of Otepää, Feb. 2. The light hearted event sponsored by the Otepää municipality attracted more than 170 teams and 750 participants from as far away as Germany, Russia, Spain and Australia.

The embassy's "Saunic Boom" team included Management Officer Mike Bradecamp, Assistant Legal Attaché Mike Shanahan and Army Attaché Lt. Col. Geoff Wright. It was supported by driver Heiki Koster and Assistant Regional Security Officer Don Pinkston. Guided by an orienteering map, the team had to find 28 saunas scattered across 22 locations. Teams in the timed competition earned extra points by dipping into holes in the ice and hot tubs. The course featured varieties of saunas found in northern Europe, including a traditional Estonian "smoke sauna," Finnish saunas, a "disco sauna" and a surprising "cold sauna." There were choirs, brass bands, local food and other cultural offerings for participants along the way.

The winning team, from Estonia, finished in two hours and 15 minutes. The U.S. team completed the course in four hours and placed in the top one-third of all teams. Wearing flag-emblazoned sauna robes, the team earned an award for spirited participation from the competition organizers and experienced the nation's serious sauna culture with a fun-loving group of competitors.

Saunic Boom attracted local and international media attention. "It's just so silly. How could you not want to participate in this?" said Ambassador Levine to one reporter. "I'm not sure where else in the world it is happening but it's happening today in Estonia and we really wanted to be part of it."



Management Officer Mike Bradecamp takes a dip in an "ice hole" during the European Sauna Marathon in Otepää, Estonia.

Photo by Jeff Levine

## Secretary Lauds 2013 Retirees

Secretary of State John Kerry extended his thanks on behalf of the State Department in January to recent Department retirees and their loved ones. He called the annual retirement ceremony recognizing those who retired in 2013 a bittersweet moment because the Department “is saying goodbye to your talent and contributions.”

He added that he suspects many have second or third careers in the offing, and urged those eligible to consider returning to the Department as rehired annuitant employees. “Consider sharing your hard-earned wisdom and counsel,” he advised.

The Secretary also thanked the retirees’ family members, saying they had patiently endured the employee’s late working hours and occasional absence from birthday parties, among other challenges.

He cited the extraordinary contributions of some who retired in 2013, including Eric Benjaminson, retired ambassador to Gabon, who helped his host nation fight wildlife poaching in Africa.

More than 200 retirees crossed the stage at the Dean Acheson Auditorium to shake hands with the Secretary at the event’s end. The 700 employees who retired in 2013 represented more than 19,000 years of service. Of the attending honorees, 44 had put in more than 40 years with the Department.



Robert Nolan, left, and Steve Nolan, brothers who became ambassadors and both retired in 2013 (*State Magazine*, January), meet with Secretary of State Kerry at the retirement ceremony. *Photo by Mark Stewart*

## Arctic Workshop Bridges Policy-Science Gap



U.S. Ambassador to Sweden Mark F. Brzezinski opens the workshop by stressing that Arctic issues are a priority at the U.S. Embassy in Stockholm, and the Fulbright Program is an important partner for solutions. *Photo by Lawrence Hislop, GRID-Arendal*

With the United States set to assume the chairmanship of the Arctic Council in 2015, and the U.S. Embassy in Sweden dealing with climate, energy, security and economic issues, the embassy organized the first Arctic Fulbright Workshop at Sweden’s Abisko Scientific Station, above the Arctic Circle.

The late-October workshop brought together Fulbright scholars, Arctic specialists and government experts from seven countries. Hosts included U.S. Ambassador to Sweden Mark Brzezinski; Tom Healy, chair of the Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board; the Stockholm Environment Institute; and the World Wildlife Fund.

“A top priority of U.S. Embassy Stockholm is to underline and symbolize the closeness of the U.S. and Sweden on the theme of the Arctic and climate change,” said Ambassador Brzezinski. As a Fulbright alumnus himself, Brzezinski endorsed the program’s ability to engage early on emerging issues, and said the workshop sought “to bridge the gap between policy-makers and researchers to address the challenges that the Arctic is facing. Even more importantly, we must identify solutions to share with the greater public.”

President Obama’s National Strategy for the Arctic Region identifies the United States as an Arctic nation, and seeks to address such issues as water acidification, pollution, ice melt, rising sea levels and disappearing species, any of which could affect the U.S. economy, national security and international stability.

The workshop resulted in a new Arctic Fulbright Network for current scholars and alumni, a never-before-available way to exchange perspectives.

During the two-day discussions, participants identified choices that stakeholders and policymakers could make to address Arctic challenges on governance, environmental resilience and security. These findings will be explored at a follow-up workshop in Sweden this fall.

Brzezinski said he and his team “will put special emphasis on the Arctic this year. By working closely with the Swedish government, we can learn from their successful chairmanship and perhaps emulate some of their best practices when the United States becomes the Arctic Council chairman in 2015.”

# Ballgame Honors Jackie Robinson

On Feb. 1, U.S. Ambassador to the Dominican Republic James Brewster and Major League Baseball star Robinson Cano of the Seattle Mariners honored U.S. baseball immortal Jackie Robinson and Black History Month at a charity softball game between U.S. Embassy in Santo Domingo volunteers and Cano's team. Embassy players wore Jackie Robinson's number 42 at the game, which focused attention on the Cano Foundation's work with disadvantaged youth. Almost 3,000 Dominican youth attended. Washington Nationals star pitcher Rafael Soriano played for the embassy team.

The Dominican youth in attendance were from teams that received donations of jerseys and equipment. The Cano Foundation provides alternatives for local underprivileged children, who face daily exposure to drugs, poverty and a lack of educational opportunities.

"Throughout his life, Robinson faced discrimination simply because he was African-American," Ambassador Brewster said, as he recounted how Robinson broke the "color bar" in American baseball because he was a gifted athlete, college graduate and ex-Army officer, and had the "strength of character to stand up to the challenges he would face as the first African-American Major League Baseball player.

"Young people today in both our countries face many challenges and obstacles," Brewster continued. "But remember Jackie Robinson. Never give up, work hard, stay in school and go after your dreams."

Robinson Cano (Jackie Robinson's namesake) and Soriano took pictures with the kids and signed autographs. The kids had a great time, as did Public Affairs Officer James Russo, who said he had the thrill of playing catch with Soriano, who sprinkled his tosses with cutting curveballs and diving sinkers. Soriano, who comes from a humble background, said he was happy to be able to give a little back to his hometown and to youngsters who are no different than he was.

In the end, Cano's team beat the embassy team 22-8. The event took place at a stadium in the town of San Pedro de Macoris, known as "the Cradle of Shortstops" and birthplace of many great Dominican ballplayers, including Cano, Soriano, Sammy Sosa and Alfonso Soriano.



Robinson Cano and Ambassador Brewster, right, stand with some of the Jackie Robinson Cup's youthful attendees.

Photo by Jose de los Santos



From left, Consular Chief Nick Manring, Consular Manager Bonnie Long and PAO David Gainer display the branding campaign's mural.

Photo by Magadhar Ballapragapa

# Banner Is Branding in Chennai

The U.S. Consulate General in Chennai, India, recently painted the post's perimeter wall with the public affairs section's "Check US Out" logo and social media information. The banner stretches across 160 square feet at the most visible part of the wall, facing a point where an average of 20,000 vehicles pass per hour.

Consular Information Unit Chief Bonnie Long called the banner "a great way to promote the post's social media sites, which are used extensively for consular messaging." The banner concludes a branding campaign that began in the consular waiting rooms eight months previously.

"This project is really a great example of the close cooperation between consular, management and public affairs," said Public Affairs Officer David Gainer. "I am really pleased with how it looks. It took a lot of hard work from beginning to end, and everyone involved did a fantastic job." Passersby have been spotted jotting down the information.

# Diversity Notes

JOHN M. ROBINSON  
OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS

## Holocaust Remembrance: A Very Personal Perspective

In April, the United States observes Holocaust Remembrance Day, also known as Yom HaShoah. Holocaust commemorations honor the memory and lives of the approximately 6 million Jewish victims who perished at the hands of the Nazis.

For two years, I worked at the Department of Energy, located just blocks away from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, but never took advantage of this close proximity to visit. It never seemed to be the “right” time to contemplate the horrific events orchestrated by Nazi perpetrators—the annihilation of millions based on their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or national origin—an act of blind intolerance, ruthless discrimination and hatred.

When I joined State, I asked how many of my staff in the Office of Civil Rights had visited the Holocaust Memorial Museum. Only three out of approximately 20 had. So, we made the time to go as a group on an arranged tour. We went with a sense of reverent personal and professional duty as practitioners in a field dedicated to advancing the principles of fairness, justice and equality in our daily work. The tour was excellent, educational and poignant. We learned at the “shoe exhibit” that a large number of children were executed, and that the Nazis employed advanced science and engineering concepts to carry out their mass murders. We also learned that, although many U.S. citizens tried to open their hearts and homes to Jewish victims and refugees, a culture of anti-Semitism also permeated America. As in other areas, a historical analysis of America’s foreign policy response to the plight of European Jews may yield disturbing results.

The system that encouraged wholesale discrimination against Jews bears a striking resemblance to the mind-set that allowed oppression of blacks to flourish in our own country since the inception of slavery. During my childhood in Alabama, the brutally harsh reality of American slavery was never a topic open for discussion. It was as though the shame that came with the rape, torture and murder of our ancestors rightly belonged to us as descendants of slaves rather than the perpetrators. We have come a long way since, but the damage is not yet undone and that part of our history cannot be erased. All aspects of America’s history must be seen with full realism, because those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it. The lessons of the Holocaust must be studied, as such horror must never be repeated.



As we commemorate Holocaust Remembrance Day, let us reflect on our moral responsibility to respect people from all walks of life. If you have never visited the Holocaust Memorial Museum, please do so soon. It may never seem like a “right” time, but it is always the right thing to do. In doing so, we honor the memory of those who died and give a measure of meaning to their suffering as we fortify ourselves to never let such horrors happen again.

For more information, you may wish to contact the Office of the Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues (<http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rt/hlcst/index.htm>) and the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (<http://j.state.sbu/tip/default.aspx>). ■

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John M. Robinson". The signature is written in a cursive style.

# Consular Affairs Milestone

## Passport agency opens in Puerto Rico

By Andrés Rodríguez, community outreach officer, Bureau of Consular Affairs

On Jan. 13, the Bureau of Consular Affairs (CA) opened its 29th passport agency, in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Passport services is the Department's largest domestic public service program, responsible for issuing U.S. passport books and passport cards to U.S. citizens via a network of passport agencies, passport printing centers and non-Department of State application acceptance facilities across the country.

"The opening of the San Juan Passport Agency is momentous; it's the first time the Bureau of Consular Affairs has ever had a U.S. passport agency outside the 50 United States," said Deputy Assistant Secretary for Passport Services Brenda S. Sprague.

The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico has been an unincorporated U.S. territory since being ceded to the United States by Spain after the Spanish-American War in 1898. Puerto Ricans have U.S. citizenship, and thus can obtain a U.S. passport. Almost 4 million people live on the island and 105,000 live in the U.S. Virgin Islands, also served by the new facility. The agency issues passports and passport cards to applicants with urgent travel planned within 14 days.

"Prior to the [passport] agency's opening, U.S. citizens in Puerto Rico and in the U.S. Virgin Islands with urgent travel had to travel first to Miami, more than 1,000 miles away, to obtain a U.S. passport," explained Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs Janice L. Jacobs. U.S. citizens needing emergency passport services in other parts of the Caribbean could only get a limited-validity passport book from one of the region's U.S. embassies prior to the opening of the San Juan agency.

Jacobs called the agency "a milestone in our efforts as we work to meet the growing demand of U.S. citizens for passports."

CA issued more than 13.5 million passports and passport cards in FY 2013, twice as many as a decade ago. "Today, there are more than 118 million U.S. passports in circulation, and it's our job to make sure that all U.S. citizens can get a passport when they need one," Jacobs said.

Located at the Centro Gubernamental Minillas in San Juan's Santurce area, the San Juan Passport Agency, a sister site of the Miami Passport Agency (*State Magazine*, March 2014), has 36 government and contract employees, with management located in Miami and San Juan.

"To serve our customers effectively, the San Juan Passport Agency is unique in that it's the only domestic Department of State office that has a language requirement for Department staff," explained the Miami-based director, Ryan Dooley.

Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton approved the agency's establishment after then-Puerto Rico Secretary of State Kenneth McClintock requested it, but asked that the Department "fund the operating costs if the Puerto Rico government provided suitable free space," Dooley said. The Puerto Rican government obliged, resulting in a 20-year rent-free space for the agency—another first for the Department.

Employees, including many who transferred from other CA domestic passport facilities, have an array of backgrounds, though all grew up and were educated in Puerto Rico, and have skills critical to identifying fraud. Dooley said the San Juan agency will strengthen CA's "commitment to detect and deter U.S. passport fraud by allowing greater collaboration with the locally based federal community and more personal interaction with staff from [the Bureau of] Diplomatic Security's Resident Office in San Juan."



Participating in the facility's ribbon-cutting were, from left, Passport Services Managing Director Florence Fultz, Puerto Rico Secretary of State David Bernier, Under Secretary for Management Patrick Kennedy, Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs Janice L. Jacobs and San Juan Passport Agency Assistant Director David Giamellara.

Photo by Ryan Dooley

On Feb. 5, more than 250 guests attended the agency's ribbon-cutting, including Under Secretary for Management Patrick F. Kennedy, who told the gathering that agency staff members are on the front lines of border security and serve as the face of the Department in Puerto Rico. Other attendees included Assistant Secretary Jacobs, Passport Services Managing Director Florence G. Fultz and Passport Services South Central Regional Director Jacki Harley-Bell. Puerto Rican Secretary of State David Bernier Rivera and former Puerto Rican Secretary of State McClintock spoke.

Department personnel also participated in a surveillance flight aboard an aircraft of the Caribbean Air and Marine Branch of U.S. Customs and Border Protection. The flight traversed the Mona Passage between Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic—a dangerous area known for drug drops and passage of undocumented migrants trying to reach Puerto Rico's Mona Island. ■



Staff of the San Juan Passport Agency include from left Jose Balado, Hector Cruz, Bill Soto, Victor Mercado, Lyndmarie Rodríguez-Roman, Carlos Torres, Ileana Vazquez Marquez, Emma Rivera-Evans and Adalberto Jimenez.

Photo by Ryan Dooley

# Virtual Interns

## Online researchers aid Moneyball project

By Nora Dempsey, senior advisor, Office of eDiplomacy

“Moneyball,” the book and movie, tells how baseball executive Billy Beane shifted from reliance on old-school scouting to applying an evidence-based approach when assembling a team. It worked; his Oakland team won 20 games in a row. Noting this, Richard Boly, former director of the Bureau of Information Resource Management’s Office of eDiplomacy (and a baseball fanatic), applied the Moneyball concept to foreign affairs with a June 2013 Moneyball Diplomacy conference on applying data-driven analysis to foreign policy.

That event led the Bureau of International Organization’s Office of Policy, Regional and Functional Organizations (IO/PRF) to consult with Boly and the eDiplomacy staff, and link its Moneyball aims with eDiplomacy’s Virtual Student Foreign Service (VSFS) program, according to Eric Nelson, current director of eDiplomacy.

IO/PRF wanted to better understand multilateral voting behavior and diplomatic outcomes in multilateral venues. Its Multilateral Moneyball effort brings together student researchers and Department officials for short-term, data-driven research projects. The research team recently examined trends and anomalies in the voting behavior of blocs and individual countries at the United Nations and other multilateral institutions, assessing their voting coincidence with the United States and its diplomatic competitors.

Bridget Roddy, VSFS program manager, directed PRF to the VSFS intranet website, where PRF submitted a project description and waited for students to register. Next, PRF’s Multilateral Moneyball coordinator, Mario Crifo, interviewed applicants and selected three—Maggie Petersen, George Kailas and Mina Pollmann—who had the strong statistical and analytical skills he needed for a team that would work largely online with IO.

It was a good fit, with the Department offering foreign affairs experience and the students bringing ideas, energy, expertise and insight. VSFS eInterns spend 10 hours a week for eight months on their projects.

Because the VSFS researchers received PRF’s guidance and mentoring during weekly group conference calls and frequent individual calls and emails, it hardly mattered that they were in Missouri, New York and London. A cloud-based shared workspace set up for the project also helped keep participants closely connected.



While working on the Moneyball project, virtual interns George Kailas, Maggie Petersen and Mina Pollmann gather in the Harry S Truman Building’s lobby.

*Photo by Ioanna Paraskevopoulos*

Although Petersen, Kailas and Pollmann only met each other and their PRF supervisors for the first time the night before their Jan. 17 presentations, they said they felt like they knew each other well.

While the virtual interns’ formal findings won’t be released until April, preliminary findings are available. Pollmann, a Georgetown University student studying at Oxford this year, found evidence that the variation in the effect of foreign assistance on U.N. voting affects how aid is delivered, including whether aid is multilateral or bilateral and whether it is project-based or has unrestricted budget support. She compared the United States with China, the European Union (EU), Japan and South Korea, and examined the importance of bilateral trade relationships.

“Evidence seems to indicate that direct budget support has a more powerful effect on recipient state policy, even when the amount is lower,” Pollmann said, adding that she’ll assess how foreign aid affects an economic relationship, and how these patterns affect America’s international competitors.

Kailas of New York University is using a statistical technique to assess the cohesion of voting blocs within the United Nations on sustainable development, human rights and multilateral resources. He is identifying countries that define and motivate consensus and countries that are the most comfortable breaking with bloc positions and can potentially encourage other countries in their region to follow suit. His research will suggest avenues for U.S. diplomatic engagement.

“The G-77 [a loose coalition of developing nations] is a key voting bloc,” Kailas explained, because of its size and diversity. He said G-77 voting behavior “is much more nuanced than previously thought. Understanding when certain members vote with or against the majority, and how those patterns change over time, will help us develop better engagement strategies.”

EU member nations’ voting at the United Nations in the past five years has shown increased divergence. Petersen of Missouri State University explained this and earlier divergences in EU bloc cohesion. Her research examined past behavior in response to economic crises and major political events.

“Economic and domestic factors continue to disrupt the EU’s best efforts to form a common foreign policy,” she observed. “By comparing changing EU voting patterns after the 2008 sovereign debt crisis with earlier similar inflection points such as the breakup of the Soviet Union, we’ll have a clearer picture of the long-term sustainability of these initiatives.”

Under the VSFS program, student journalists, scientists, mathematicians, graphic designers, researchers and social media experts offer valuable skills, form networks and even gain college course credit. This year, 505 virtual interns, more than double the level of last year, worked on 276 projects. The program received 2,630 applications through USAJobs.com.

“We couldn’t be more pleased with our collaboration with the Office of eDiplomacy and the Virtual Student Foreign Service program,” said IO/PRF Director Joe Cassidy. “Our student researchers are doing cutting-edge analysis that is yielding insights that will improve our understanding of the multilateral world and lead to more effective U.S. diplomacy.”

Offices can submit a request for one or more virtual interns for the 2014-2015 program via the intranet site [eIntern.state.gov](http://eIntern.state.gov) beginning May 1. Requests must be submitted by June 10. For additional information or questions, contact [VSFS@state.gov](mailto:VSFS@state.gov). ■



**Above:** Mina Pollmann takes in the view atop the University Church of St. Mary's the Virgin in Oxford, England.

*Photo by Konrad Pollmann*

**Below:** Maggie Petersen does some sightseeing in Croatia during her 2013 study abroad.

*Photo by Emily Hollander*

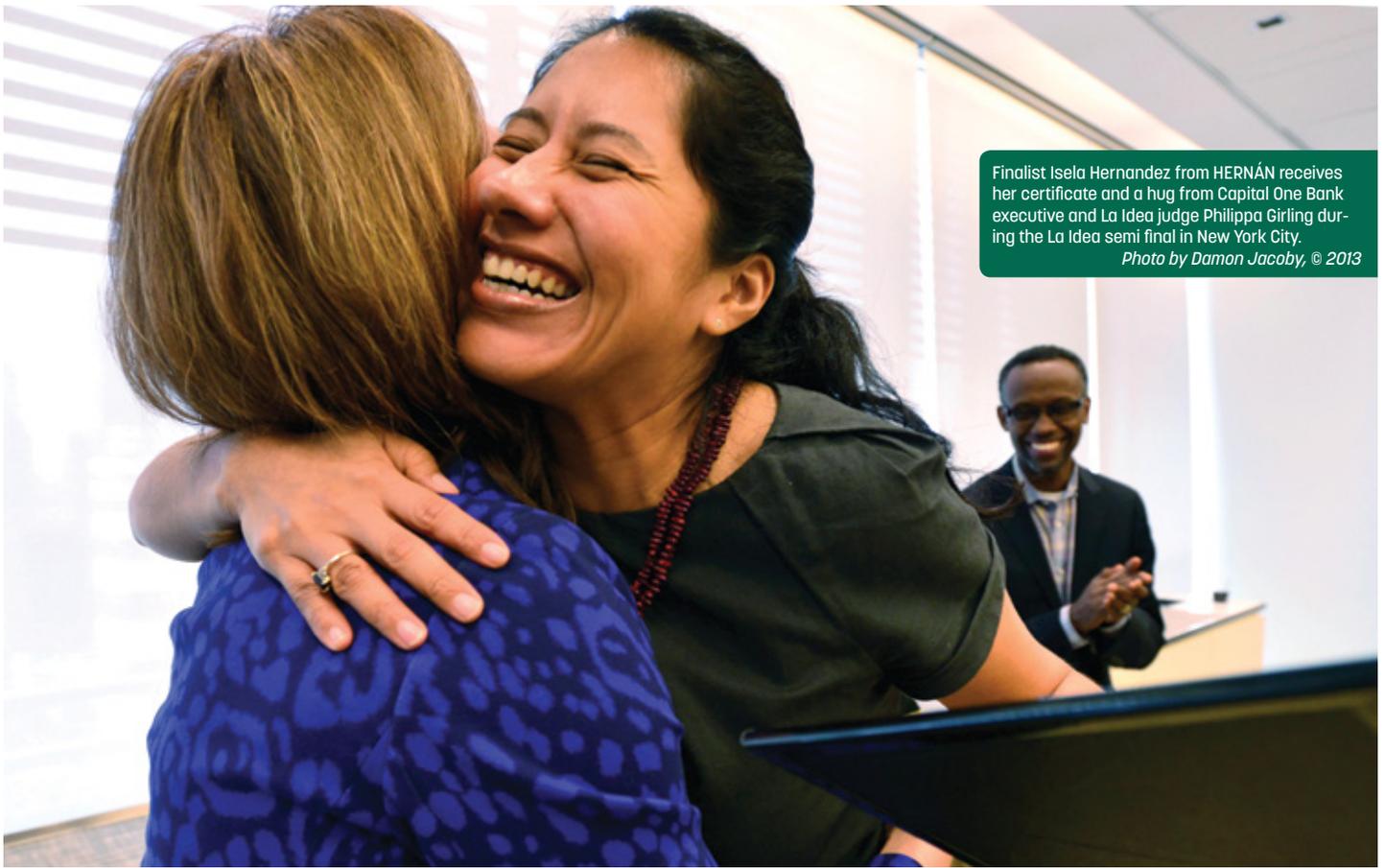


## VSFS Projects Address Many Needs

Virtual Student Foreign Service eInterns this year are involved in a range of projects. At the Office of the Historian, for instance, three library science students have improved access to the Department’s historical records by applying tags to hundreds of resources, a subject taxonomy available at <http://history.state.gov/tags>.

Intellectual Property Enforcement has eight business students improving the business environment for American companies through quantitative and qualitative analyses of how public diplomacy and intellectual property reporting tools build a positive business climate. Working with university professors and other Department offices, the interns are using their skills in economics, statistics and qualitative analysis.

In the Office of Investment Affairs, two economics students developed a friendlier set of instructions during the Investment Climate Statement process. The office also has a law student whose legal research supported the Principal Bilateral Investment Treaty negotiator during preparation for discussions with China.



Finalist Isela Hernandez from HERNÁN receives her certificate and a hug from Capital One Bank executive and La Idea judge Philippa Girling during the La Idea semi final in New York City.

Photo by Damon Jacoby, © 2013

# == Pitching Hits ==

## Contest features young Latino entrepreneurs

By Jose Santacana, deputy director, Office of Regional Economic Policy and Summit Coordination, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs

With the clock ticking, TV cameras rolling and two senior Department officials urging them on, contestants in the La Idea finals in Miami on Dec. 13 competed for \$100,000 in prize money, to be awarded to the ones making the winning corporate “pitches.”

The result: more excitement than any reality TV show.

Competing Latin American entrepreneurs had five minutes to present a business model and their startup company’s vision to a panel of industry experts. The finalists, representing 16 high-potential start ups and seven Latin American countries with partners in the United States, had beaten out dozens of companies in the La Idea semi finals in New York City and Bogotá, Colombia.

As media from three continents and a crowd of more than 100 people watched, including Assistant Secretary for Western Hemisphere Affairs Roberta Jacobson and

the Secretary’s Special Representative for Global Partnerships Andrew O’Brien, the judges carefully scored the pitches, giving weight to solid business plans, accurate financial projections, insightful market analysis and contestants’ leadership and passion.

The La Idea business pitch competition was launched by the International diaspora Engagement Alliance (IdEA), a public-private partnership that leverages the talents of Latinos living abroad to strengthen diplomacy and promote innovation, volunteerism and philanthropy worldwide. La Idea ([www.LaIdea.co](http://www.LaIdea.co)) stimulates and connects young Latino entrepreneurs and rewards innovative ideas. To participate, each entrepreneur had to form a partnership with a U.S. counterpart.

In the competition, the young entrepreneurs brimmed with excitement as they told their companies’ stories and how they wanted to make a difference in

the world. Bruno Campo, the designer of Mi Aguila, a mobile application for safely hailing taxis in Bogotá, said he was inspired by having nearly been a crime victim and his desire to make conditions safer for other late-night cab riders. Alejandra Boggiano said she left Peru dreaming of becoming a fashion designer in the United States, and after finishing design school in New York started her company, Solkissed Swimwear, with her mother in Lima. “I never thought that a woman entrepreneur could make it in international business, but my Mom and I sure proved that idea wrong,” she told the audience.

Win or lose, the 16 finalists had plenty to be satisfied about in Miami; all benefited from a week long BoomCamp developed by the Secretary’s Global Partnership Initiative, coordinated by the Department and USAID and hosted by Miami-based tech accelerator Venture Hive. Isela Hernandez, a finalist from Mexico, raved about “the

incredible amount of advice” she received at BoomCamp, especially on developing a business plan and talking to investors. She thanked the State Department for the chance to showcase her company and compete on an international stage.

In addition to providing mentoring and business acceleration tips, BoomCamp offered the entrepreneurs advice on developing corporate models and sharpening their final pitch presentations.

The finals were emceed by Univision TV news anchor Enrique Acevedo, who provided lively banter. But for contestants the wait was nerve-wracking. Finally, after intense deliberation, the experts announced that Natural Sins, a Costa Rican dried fruit snack company, had won a first-place grant of \$50,000. Chile’s Agronometrics, an online agricultural information company, and Colombia’s Kahai SAS, a company commercializing the nut from the Amazonian Cacay tree, won runner-up prizes of \$25,000 each.

Colin Fain, the American partner of Agronometrics, thanked the State Department for “giving my company the financial and business support needed to develop the next-generation products for our market intelligence platform.”

U.S. efforts to promote wider prosperity in Latin America include supporting younger entrepreneurs and finding innovative ways to bring more small and medium-sized businesses into the formal economy. Assistant Secretary Jacobson told La Idea’s finalists to “never lose your passion and creativity, as your ideas and energy are critical to building the region’s economy for the 21st century.

“By taking risks and pursuing your dreams, by creating jobs and helping to improve the lives of your neighbors and communities, you are inspiration to us all,” she said.

The La Idea competition underscores not just the importance of youth entrepreneurship for the region, but also Latinos’ important role in the U.S. economy. It debunks the myth that small companies cannot engage in international business. One Miami finalist, LuxBloom, supplies major hotel chains in North America with long-life roses, employing 80 people in a rural community in Ecuador.

Currently, 2.3 million Latino entrepreneurs in the United States generate \$345 billion in sales and are opening new companies at double the national rate. Latinos in the United States also send home more than \$53 billion in remittances each year, with some of it helping to start new companies.

La Idea, which began in 2011 and soon became a key component of the Small Business Network of the Americas, is a public-private partnership among the State Department, USAID, the Small Business Administration, the Inter-American Development Bank, Univision Networks, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, Boom Financial, Accion and WellSpace.



In Miami, the partnership provided a platform for entrepreneurs to put their ideas on display, with the goal of launching businesses that can grow and compete globally. “The passion and prowess of the final contestants was on display, and their pitches were top-notch” said Special Representative O’Brien. “This truly highlights the positive results of a public-private alliance in support of fostering entrepreneurship in the region.”

While the final showcase was the program’s culminating event, over the past year another component of the partnership, *La Idea en Accion*, created a series of customized business advising seminars in 11 U.S. cities and five events in Latin America, giving U.S. and Latino entrepreneurs a forum to meet and receive advice from international business experts. During these “roadshows,” experts trained more than 1,000 entrepreneurs on starting and growing a business and provided information on accessing business resources.

Using the Small Business Administration’s network of small business development centers, the roadshows featured international trade experts and discussions of access to capital, insurance and marketing. They also assisted attendees in building networks with entrepreneurs and organizations to expand their businesses. Ninety percent of roadshow attendees said *La Idea en Accion* positively affected their business. Stella Bustos, the owner of TheraPillows, who participated in a La Idea Roadshow in San Antonio, said, “I wouldn’t have had anywhere else to go to get this information.”

The Miami final event attracted U.S.-based Latino media outlets, Latin American media and China’s largest TV station, reflecting that country’s economic engagement in the region. More than 25 newspapers published articles, including the *Wall Street Journal*, *Notimex* and Venezuela’s *El Universal*. Five major TV outlets covered the event, including La Idea sponsor Univision, whose extensive story reached Latino markets throughout the United States.

U.S. diplomatic posts throughout the hemisphere helped get the word out on La Idea, attracting more than 800 applicants. Some of the entrepreneurs first met during Global Entrepreneurship Week or other post events, leading to the partnerships that competed in the pitch competition. The U.S. Embassy in Bogota produced a YouTube video of the semi final competition, capturing its excitement and underscoring the La Idea message on entrepreneurship and innovation. The video is at [http://youtu.be/jmJMW\\_aZNls](http://youtu.be/jmJMW_aZNls).

La Idea exemplifies the rewards of partnering and using a whole of government approach. And it brought great rewards. As Bogota entrepreneur Campo put it: “La Idea has changed my life and how I do business.” ■

**Top:** Sabrina Mirtcheva from BNP Paribas, center, mentors semi finalists David Garcia and Max Hernandez during the La Idea semi final in New York City.

*Photo by Damon Jacoby, © 2013*

**Left:** WHA Assistant Secretary Roberta Jacobson samples a snack as she and Special Representative for Global Partnerships Andrew O’Brien speak with one of the owners of Natural Sins LLC at the La Idea final showcase.

*Photo by Hector Cerpa*

# Harlem to Honduras

## Dancers' tour promotes social inclusion

By Adaeze J. Igwe, cultural affairs officer, U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa, Honduras

The U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa early this year wanted to offer Hondurans cultural programming underscoring the importance of social inclusion, so it brought 21 members of the acclaimed Dance Theatre of Harlem to Honduras for a series of activities coinciding with the embassy's celebration of Black History Month. The dance company's tour, its first visit to Central America, ran Jan. 31-Feb. 6, under the auspices of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' Arts Envoy Program.

Given the importance of social inclusion to democratic stability, Embassy Tegucigalpa has encouraged recognition of the past and potential contributions of disadvantaged and marginalized groups in Honduras, and highlighted America's progress on promoting equality and respect for the contributions of its ethnic and racial groups.

For Black History Month, the embassy sought to highlight specifically the contributions of African Americans. It worked with Dance Theatre of Harlem to offer a series of performances and workshops aimed at underserved communities that include youths of different racial, ethnic and economic groups. Dance Theatre of Harlem, an iconic African American institution, fuses European and African influences, and its dancers come from many ethnic and international backgrounds. As Ambassador Lisa Kubiske put it, "Dance Theatre of Harlem ... illustrates the importance of social inclusion and collaboration between individuals of different backgrounds."

Dance Theatre of Harlem Artistic Director Virginia Johnson said, "It is a powerful message to see a stage full of dancers of many hues working in unison to create an extraordinary experience of art. I would like to think that the impact of Dance Theatre of Harlem and the diversity it embodies goes beyond the world of dance and can be perceived as a model for other art forms and professions."

The dance company, which trains young people in classical ballet and the allied arts and does community outreach, was chosen, Kubiske said, "because we believe it is important that Honduran youth see examples of excellence, as exemplified by this amazingly talented group of young people."

Dance Theatre of Harlem offered 10 young Honduran ballerinas the opportunity to be part of its performances in Tegucigalpa. The lucky 10 were picked during two-day auditions held prior to the group's arrival by volunteer dance experts from within the embassy community. More than 80 young ballerinas from public and private dance schools participated. They were from different cities and ethnic and social backgrounds, but were encouraged to work together and bond during their time with each other.

Some girls traveled a long distance and many came from families of limited financial resources, but as the mother of one said, "I made an investment in my child. It is all going to be worth it."

**Left:** Nayara Lopes and Sam Wilson of Dance Theatre of Harlem captivate with their performance of the Black Swan at Tegucigalpa's Manuel Bonilla National Theater; **Opposite top:** Jenelle Figgins leaps during a performance; **Right:** Dance Theatre of Harlem and Honduran ballerinas take bows after performing at Manuel Bonilla National Theater. *Photos by Daniel A. Durazo*







On the day after their arrival, Dance Theatre of Harlem dancers offered simultaneous workshops and master classes throughout Tegucigalpa, attracting Hondurans of every age, race, gender, ethnicity and social class. To ensure gender diversity in the program, the company hosted a workshop geared toward boys, emphasizing athletics and dance-driven body-strengthening techniques. At-risk Honduran youth from the capital's gang-plagued neighborhoods experienced teamwork, self-discipline and artistic endeavor. More than 300 young Hondurans attended the master classes and workshops. "Several members of the company mentioned that the workshops were the high point of the trip for them," said Public Affairs Counselor Stephen Posivak. "They were touched and inspired by the passion and resolve of the young dancers." Dance Theatre of Harlem dancers also participated in a cultural exchange with the Garifuna Ballet, a folkloric dance company made up of members of the Garifuna community, an Afro-Honduran group.

The dance company's two free public performances at the Manuel Bonilla National Theater in the capital's historic downtown generated record, standing-room-only crowds. More than 1,500 Hondurans attended, and approximately 300 people per night had to be turned away for lack of seats.

A separate invitation-only event attracted more than 300 senior government officials, nationally renowned artists, business leaders and the heads of multinational and NGOs. Ambassador Kubiske told attendees that public-private partnerships are important for support of the arts in Honduras.

Before departing Honduras, the dance company offered two scholarships for young dancers from the National School of Dance to train with Dance Theatre of Harlem for a month in New York this summer.

Keith Saunders, the company's ballet master, said he hopes the scholarship winners will come to "understand that it is through persistence and hard work that success is achieved. And I'd like them to have fun experiencing a different country and a different culture and language and meeting new people. I hope the youngsters will get a sense of and a feeling for what we all have in common, no matter one's nationality, background or economic circumstance." ■

**Above:** Figgins strikes a pose; **Below:** From left, Francis Lawrence, Da'Von Doane, Chrystyn Fentroy and Anthony Savoy of Dance Theatre of Harlem mesmerize audience at Tegucigalpa's Manuel Bonilla National Theater; **Right:** Alexandra Jacob teaches young ballerinas at the SOAM Ballet School in Tegucigalpa. *Photos by Daniel A. Durazo*





# JOB CREATION

## Employment advisors promote entrepreneurship

By Rachel Fredman, Presidential Management Fellow, formerly at the U.S. Embassy in Manama, Bahrain

The Department's Global Employment Initiative (GEI) doesn't just help family members find overseas employment; it also helps them create income streams through entrepreneurship.

GEI, a Family Liaison Office (FLO) program, has 17 regional Global Employment Advisors (GEAs) serving posts worldwide. They help family members of U.S. foreign affairs direct-hire employees explore employment and career options, provide onsite and online job coaching sessions, and provide training and career development services. GEAs also help family members strengthen job networking skills as they move from post to post; a February GEI webinar focused on networking. In 2013, GEAs had approximately 3,000 client meetings and provided training and information workshops to almost 1,000 family members.

Shawn Akard, the GEA based in Jordan, used the November 2013 Global Entrepreneurship Week organized by the U.S. Embassy in Manama both to expand family member employment opportunities in Bahrain and promote family members starting and running businesses there.

The embassy invited Akard to participate in the entrepreneurship events in Manama where she connected with Bahrain's growing business community to aid her outreach work. Akard lauded Management Officer Danny Stoian for seeing "the opportunity to expand potential family member employment opportunities."

Global Entrepreneurship Week began with a reception at the residence of Ambassador Thomas C. Krajewski attended by leading Bahraini employers. Akard met with the director of a consulting firm who in turn connected her with the director of the Bahrain Women's Business Association and the human capital manager of a major recruiting firm in Bahrain. Networking is crucial to helping family members find employment, especially in nations like Bahrain, which has a bilateral work agreement with the United States but where the business culture emphasizes face-to-face relationships. (FLO facilitates and monitors bilateral agreements and helps create awareness of host countries' work permit regulations.)

The GEI program gives family members information about employment prospects and local job search processes. Often, GEAs develop relationships with local American Chamber of Commerce representatives so that family members become comfortable using the organization as a networking resource.

Because many family members work in local schools while overseas, GEAs also make connections with the schools to ensure posts are aware

of local hiring mechanisms. While in Bahrain, Akard, with help from the Community Liaison Office, visited three schools and the American Chamber of Commerce. She will work with the post to compile the information from the meetings into a Post Employment Guide and Eligible Family Member (EFM) Questionnaire for incoming families.

But Akard, like many GEAs, emphasizes entrepreneurship. She attended a workshop on the topic given by Brown University Professor Danny Warshay, and learned "to think differently about starting a business." She tailored information from the workshop to fit her Portable Careers workshop for family members, who often struggle to find employment opportunities in host country economies. By using such strategies as telecommuting, creating home-based businesses and taking on consulting work, family members can build entrepreneurial careers overseas, she said.

Joy Fisher, a family member who attended Akard's Portable Careers workshop, said, "Shawn gave us specific examples of spouses who had developed successful consulting businesses, and helped me realize that the sky is really the limit in terms of employment. This really helped me picture myself working outside an EFM role and consider other possibilities." As with all GEA site visits, Akard conducted one-on-one sessions for clients in Manama and addressed questions about resumes, continuing education, career direction and working for the federal government upon return to the United States.

Akard's Manama visit demonstrates the synergy between embassy outreach events and GEAs' work to increase employment for family members. "The connections made through each Global Employment Advisor around the world are invaluable to meeting FLO's mission to improve the quality of life of direct-hire employees and their family members," FLO Director Susan Frost said. "We hope family members continue to take advantage of the many services FLO offers, and extend our appreciation to Embassy Manama for its support of family member employment at post."

Discover more about FLO online at [state.gov/m/dghr/flo](http://state.gov/m/dghr/flo). GEI can be emailed at [gei@state.gov](mailto:gei@state.gov). ■

**Top Left:** Local employer Nabeel A. Rahman Ajoor, director of A. Rahman & E. M. Ajoor & Co., meets with GEA Shawn Akard and Embassy Manama co-CLOs Karla Wilson and Nahreen Ure. *Photo by Rachel Fredman;* **Top Right:** Embassy Manama's Eligible Family Members gather at GEA Akard's workshop on portable careers. *Photo by Shawn Akard*

## Office of the Month



Program Support Assistant Mary Foreman and Presidential Appointments Technician Steven Kot stand ready to place the seal onto a document.

Photo by Ed Warner

# GUARDIANS OF THE SEAL

## Presidential Appointments has unique role

By Jessica Newcomb, presidential appointments technician, office of presidential appointments

The Office of Presidential Appointments (HR/PAS) in the Bureau of Human Resources has one of the Department's more unusual missions, one that affects Foreign Service officers and other government employees posted overseas under chief of mission authority and nearly every senior-level presidential appointee, including Department principals such as the Secretary of State and ambassadors.

This is because the office is the Keeper of the Great Seal of the United States and, thus, is the primary customer service provider to the White House for all documents on which the Great Seal is affixed.

"Despite its small staff, the Office of Presidential Appointments' reach is expansive, not only within the Department but also across the U.S. government," said Acting Director General Hans Klemm. "I think people are surprised by the historical significance of the office's operations and what it is responsible for producing on behalf of the Secretary and the White House."

The signers of the Declaration of Independence asked John Adams, Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson to create a great seal for the new nation, and Congress in 1789 made the Secretary of State the seal's custodian, calling on the Secretary to affix the seal to all civil commissions of officers of the United States appointed by the president.

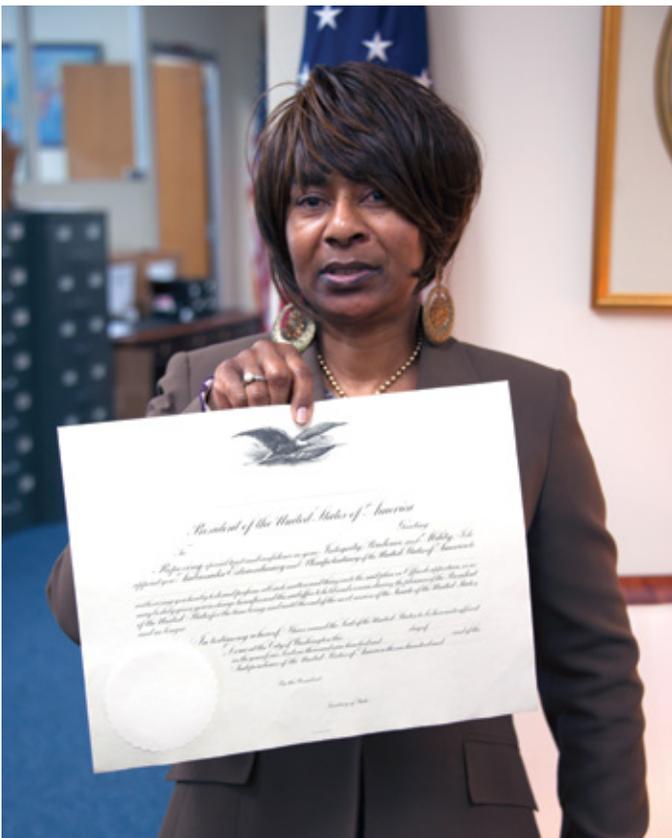
The Great Seal is in the Harry S Truman Building's Exhibit Hall and is used regularly by HR/PAS in administering Foreign Service and civil commissioning programs for the Department, most executive branch agencies and the judiciary. Annually, HR/PAS produces approximately

700 civil commissions and 1,500 Foreign Service commissions. The seal is also used for newly appointed entry-level FSOs, tenuring actions and Senior Foreign Service promotions, as well as for positions that date back to the country's founding, such as the secretary of the Treasury. (HR/PAS still has records for some of these earliest appointments, when record keeping was done by hand in a bound ledger, a practice that only ended in the 1980s.)

Only five HR/PAS employees are authorized to use the Great Seal on behalf of the Secretary. They stamp it on all commissioning certificates, ambassadorial credentials and instruments of ratification signed by the president and counter-signed by the Secretary.

HR/PAS collaborates with the Office of the Historian to lead tours and provide impromptu history lessons about the seal's creation and use. It briefs Department staff and external groups, ranging from Girl Scout troops to academics and foreign visitors. HR/PAS partnered with the Office of the Historian on 2013 Take-Your-Child-to-Work Day activities during which children and their parents were excited to see the Great Seal in action.

HR/PAS also directs the Department's title and rank program and accords diplomatic and consular titles to all U.S. government employees assigned overseas under chief of mission authority. Title and Rank Officer Steve Burback works with the Office of the Legal Adviser, other government agencies and posts worldwide to execute the program. In 2013, he accorded more than 6,000 diplomatic and consular titles.



**Clockwise from upper left:** Priscilla Linn, curator of the United States Diplomacy Center, explains the history of the Great Seal of the United States to visiting students. *Photo by Mark Stewart;* Deputy Director Steven Burback meets with the author in his office; Presidential Appointments Technician Marie Dorsey displays an Ambassadorial Commission document. *Photos by Ed Warner*

The office is well-known for its role in guiding the Department's senior-level presidential appointees, career and non career, through the extensive appointment and confirmation process. The year immediately following a Presidential election is particularly busy, given the significant changes in Department leadership domestically and overseas, and the high number of non-career appointees. In 2013, HR/PAS supported more than 160 presidential candidates.

HR/PAS Director Jennifer Wicks and her team help each presidential candidate navigate the process. During the initial vetting, the candidates undergo a thorough background investigation, review of any potential conflicts of interest and ethics considerations, and a vetting interview. Overseas positions also require a medical clearance. HR/PAS fields questions, especially from non career candidates, regarding such topics as the hiring and confirmation process, the Department's organization and culture, and the logistics of moving, including taking pets to post and finding schools.

Once vetting is successfully completed, the White House may, in the case of chief of mission candidates, authorize HR/PAS to request agreement from the relevant foreign government. HR/PAS also introduces candidates to regional or functional bureau contacts who play a critical role in preparing them for their potential positions and confirmation hearings, and schedule consultations with key offices. For chief of mission candidates, the White House makes an announcement and sends the nomination to the Senate after the host government agrees with the proposed candidate.

After announcement and nomination, the Bureau of Legislative Affairs works with the nominee and bureau to begin preparations for the Senate confirmation hearing, which may entail making courtesy calls at senators' offices. Once confirmed and attested or appointed by the President, the nominee works with HR/PAS on planning his or her swearing-in ceremony.

"The best part of this job is working with each of these candidates and guiding them through what can be a lengthy and confusing process," Wicks said. "It's truly a pleasure to shake someone's hand at their swearing-in ceremony and congratulate them on their new position."

Finally, when chiefs of mission retire, HR/PAS prepares commemorative flags to honor their service. Its work then comes full circle: It's one of the first offices to congratulate a new appointee, and it's where the flag is readied to commemorate the appointee's service.

"This job is challenging, but interesting," said HR/PAS staff member Steven Kot. "I enjoy working with the White House and people from agencies across government, as well as teaching others about the history of the Great Seal and showing them how we create presidential commissions."

Longtime HR/PAS employee Marie Dorsey agreed, saying she learns something new every day.

More information about HR/PAS is on its SharePoint site, <http://hr.m.state.sbu/office/MDGHR/HRPAS/default.aspx>. ■

# Green Team

## OBO promotes posts' eco-diplomacy

By Donna McIntire, chief of Energy and Sustainable Design (OBO Green Team), Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations



Secretary of State Kerry meets with the OBO Green Team in recognition of the Exceptional Employees Award. Photo by Michael A. Gross

Secretary of State John Kerry recently met with the Green Team of the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) to recognize how it has helped overseas facilities improve sustainability and reduce resource use. He also signed a copy of the team's second edition of the "Guide to Green Embassies: Eco-Diplomacy in Operation" ([http://overseasbuildings.state.gov/green\\_guide/](http://overseasbuildings.state.gov/green_guide/)).

For years, the team has been producing tools for posts to manage legacy buildings, providing technical support for post projects to improve energy and water efficiencies, and serving as the catalyst for greening our new construction projects. More than 20 facilities are now certified under the internationally recognized LEED®: Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design green building rating system.

As the Green Team sees it, posts seeking to go green need committed champions empowered by management to lead, must collaborate with key partners and should communicate and recognize achievements. Approximately 150 posts have green teams, which are composed of a small but committed staff. They need management support and the tools to maintain momentum and deliver successful results.

The "Guide to Green Embassies" and companion "Post Green Team Toolkit" were developed to equip posts' green teams and advocates with best practices, case studies and lessons learned, so as to minimize duplicative efforts, increase environmental impact, help change behavior and support the Department's Greening Diplomacy Initiative (GDI). The guide is a "green cookbook" of strategies to manage

transportation, sites, water, energy, materials, indoor environment and residential properties, and has guidance on occupant behavior and staff engagement. The toolkit offers techniques for enlisting team members, gaining management approval and adopting a charter and guiding principles, plus information on developing a work plan, maintaining momentum, educating peers and delivering results.

According to Shannon Petry of the U.S. Embassy in Riyadh's Green Team, "One of the challenges we face is sustaining our environmental initiatives when green team members depart post for their next tour, taking two or three years of knowledge and experience—and relationships with helpful local contacts—with them. It can feel like we have to reinvent the wheel." The two guides help new members get up to speed.

Ronald Acuff of Embassy Monrovia's Green Team agreed, noting that the collected green wisdom in the guides keeps his team going. "We are all excited and believe in what we're doing, but we need support in keeping the momentum going over time," he observed.

Information, expertise, and partnerships are essential for green team growth, expansion and success. For instance, the green team at the U.S. Embassy in Managua, Nicaragua, sought collaboration with key internal and external partners to install the Department's largest solar photovoltaic (PV) array. They attributed their success to OBO's expertise and funding received from Lockheed Martin, a company able to perform what's known as an Energy Savings Performance Contract.



“I am so proud of my staff, OBO and Lockheed Martin for this groundbreaking project that will reduce our use of outside power by more than 50 percent,” said Ambassador Phyllis Powers. It’s important for the embassy to act as a good neighbor and help “protect and preserve this lovely environment for future generations,” she added.

“Seeing ordinary families and small business owners worry about rising fuel costs and the effects of climate change, I am pleased that the embassy is setting an example in promoting green energy as a pillar of sustainable development,” she said.

The project produces 1 megawatt of PV and includes new site and interior lighting based on light-emitting diodes, plus a nighttime generator and upgraded transformers. It will save \$36 million in utility costs over its lifespan.

In greening efforts, a project’s results should be evaluated against performance goals using industry metrics. For example, OBO uses LEED to benchmark results of its newly constructed buildings. The 20 LEED-certified embassies and consulates have seen, on average:

- 25 percent reductions in energy use,
- 35 percent reductions in indoor potable water use,
- 76 percent reductions in outdoor irrigation water use, and
- 48 percent reductions in construction and non hazardous solid waste.

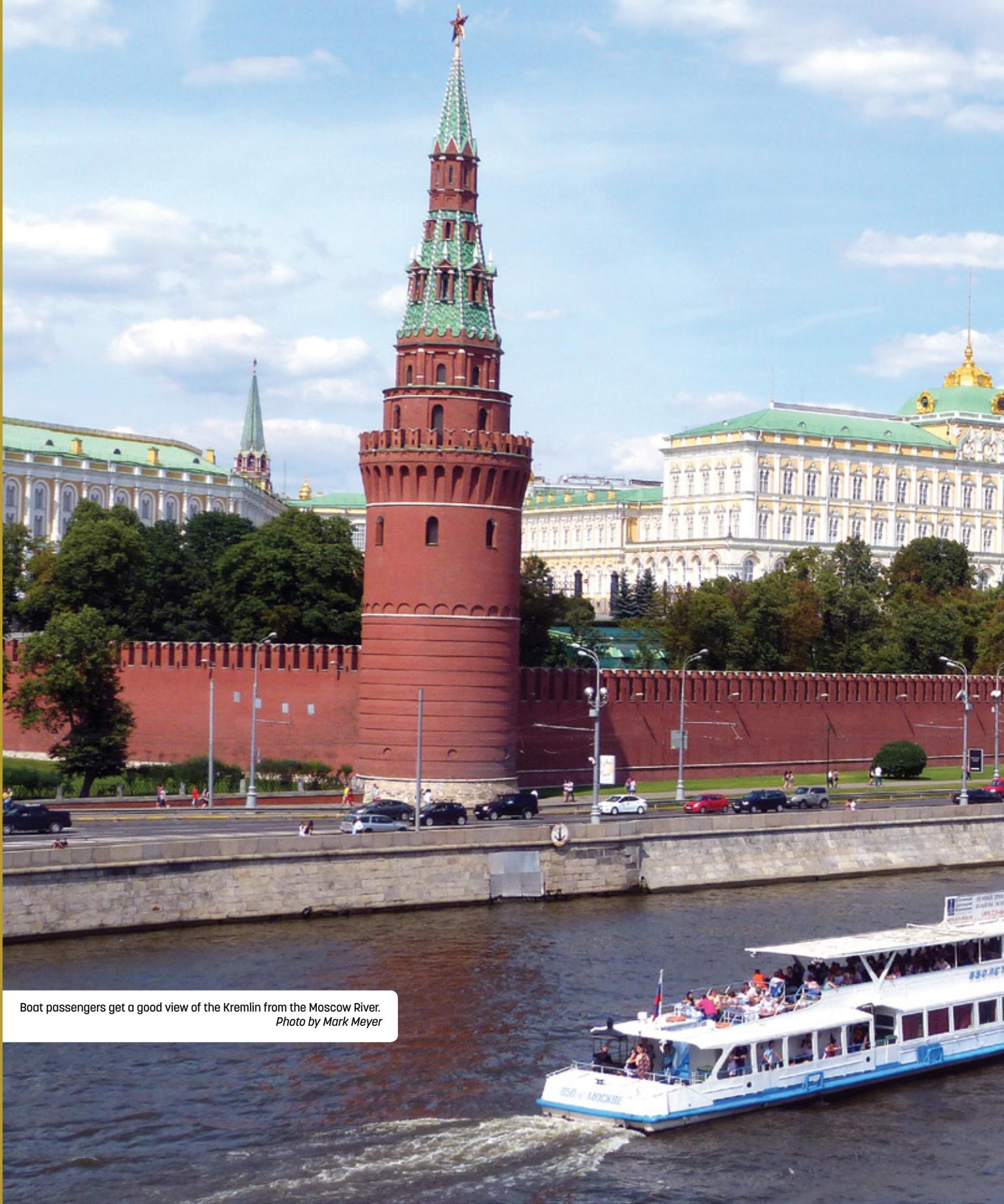
At the U.S. Embassy in Helsinki, Finland, the Innovation Center recently earned LEED Platinum status, a first for a Department building. Ambassador Bruce Oreck said, “Two of my primary goals

as ambassador to Finland were to demonstrate the best in American technology through the first LEED Platinum embassy building and to gain the pledge of over 100 members to the League of Green Embassies. Achievements like this provide us with solid platforms for eco-diplomacy.”

It’s important for green teams to communicate their positive measurable impacts and praise those involved. Teams can submit a GDI Success Story, for posting on an online map. The Department annually gives GDI awards, and posts often have their own greening success awards.

Post green teams should use the guide and toolkit and learn about the important environmental issues in their regions, which can vary from water scarcity to deforestation and waste management. Once issues are identified, teams should work with post management and the public affairs section to engage key partners. They should start by seeking small victories: perhaps an educational or community event such as a tree planting or panel discussion on recycling opportunities. They can work to raise awareness of the issues, change behavior and increase staff engagement. Then, as they gain momentum and greater support, they can tackle such larger issues as improving residential energy and water use.

There is ample room for improvement, and it just takes the commitment and action of a few to make a difference. ■



Boat passengers get a good view of the Kremlin from the Moscow River.  
*Photo by Mark Meyer*

# Moscow

City of contrasts offers rich culture and rewarding work

By Elizabeth Meyer, assistant information officer, U.S. Embassy in Moscow





Moscow is a city of contrasts: Though the Stalin-era “Seven Sisters” skyscrapers still dot the skyline, modern skyscrapers now loom over colorful Orthodox cathedral domes and Soviet-style apartment buildings. Clunky Ladas share the streets with luxury sedans. Former factories host art galleries and trendy cafes. In this city of 12 million, visitors can always find something to suit their tastes, from the Tretyakov art gallery to the cat circus, from world-famous Bolshoi ballet performances to sculpture gardens.

The Kremlin and Red Square are located in the heart of Moscow, where visitors can walk to St. Basil’s cathedral, the extravagant GUM department store and Lenin’s mausoleum. But they should also hop on Moscow’s famous metro, joining 7 million daily commuters, to explore the wider city.

Novodevichy convent, named a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2004, is worth a visit. The nearby Novodevichy cemetery holds the tombs of Russian authors, musicians, actors, political leaders and poets, and is one of the most popular tourist sites in Moscow. The massive Cathedral of Christ the Savior, the site of Pussy Riot’s controversial performance in 2012, had been demolished under Stalin in 1931, but was rebuilt on the same site in the 1990s after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Gorky Park, Moscow’s equivalent to New York’s Central Park, offers the largest artificial ice skating rink in Europe in the winter and beautiful gardens, fountains and rollerblading space in the summer.

**Cafes and parks**

Patriarch’s Pond, made famous by Mikhail Bulgakov’s novel “The Master and Margarita,” is just a short walk from the U.S. Embassy and is surrounded by popular cafes. The U.S. ambassador’s historic residence, Spaso House, the setting of a lavish ball in Bulgakov’s novel, is located just off Old Arbat, a pedestrian street known for its restaurants, coffee shops and souvenir stores. Embassy staff can enjoy opera and ballet, visit world-class museums and check out Moscow’s thriving culinary scene. During the mild summer weather, expansive parks feature forest strolls, tsarist estates and special exhibits. Winter offers ice skating, cross-country skiing and the popular expat sport broomball. Or you can warm up and relax in a traditional Russian sauna, called a “banya”.



**Above:** Fireworks illuminate the multicolored onion domes of St. Basil’s Cathedral in Red Square.

**Left:** The U.S. Embassy men’s broomball team plays against other expat groups.

*Photo by Tricia Mack*

*Photo by Julie Queen*



**Above:** Artists sell their paintings on the Arbat pedestrian street.

*Photo by Bob Meister*

**Right:** A bemedaled dancer and his partner take a spin at the ambassador's Veterans Day reception.

*Photo by Stefan Mizha*



As Russia's hub for national and international travel, Moscow is served by three international airports and numerous train stations named after the far-off destinations to which their tracks lead: Kyiv, Belarus, Leningrad (St. Petersburg), Riga and points in the interior of Russia.

The 200-plus direct-hire Americans at Embassy Moscow work for more than 30 government agencies and departments. The embassy supports numerous high-level visits, including President Barack Obama for the G-20 in 2013 and delegations to the 2014 Winter Olympics and Paralympics. Russia hosts a number of large international events annually, such as the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, and is an important global player as a member of the U.N. Security Council and partner in the P5+1. The U.S. and Russia address shared challenges and explore new opportunities for partnership under the framework of the Bilateral Presidential Commission, which has working groups on bilateral issues such as energy, the environment, health, agriculture and science and technology.

Embassy Moscow focuses on a number of bilateral and global issues, such as Syria, Iran and Afghanistan. Ambassador Michael McFaul, who was well-known throughout Russia for his creative use of social media and efforts to reach out to youth audiences, helped the embassy circumvent the state-controlled media and reach the Russian public. With the support of the economic section, he brought together American and Russian innovators to share ideas and build entrepreneurship and venture capital institutions.

The embassy works to expand the U.S.-Russia trade relationship and address trade barriers. U.S. exports amounted to \$11.1 billion in 2013, an increase of 109 percent since 2009. Programs such as SelectUSA encourage Russian investment in American jobs and factories, while embassy cooperation with local business groups like the American Chamber of Commerce in Russia helps ensure that U.S. investors can prosper in the growing Russian market.



**Above:** Handcrafted nesting dolls are among the souvenirs in a holiday display.

*Photo by Valentin Yatsenko*



**Above:** A Soviet-style monument honors Yuri Gagarin, the first person in space. *Photo by Bill Bistansky*; **Below:** Russian opera star Svetlana Kasyan performs at an International Women's Day concert. *Photo by Stefan Mizha*

### Consular services

The number of Russians traveling to the United States increases every year. Since implementation of the 2012 U.S.-Russia bilateral visa agreement, travelers can now apply for three-year visas. In 2013, Mission Russia issued more than a quarter million non immigrant visas, and tourist/business visa issuances increased 25 percent from 2012 to 2013. The embassy offers consular and American citizen services to a large portion of Siberia, including Irkutsk, where a group of embassy employees recently ran a marathon on frozen Lake Baikal.

Because of increased demand for visas and the growth of other sections of the embassy, construction on a new seven-story embassy annex adjacent to the current chancery building began early this year. The first two floors of the New Office Annex (NOX) will provide consular and visa services to the rapidly growing number of Russian travelers and citizen services to Americans. The NOX will consolidate isolated mission offices and provide modern and secure facilities for the staff and public.

The public affairs section, boasting one of the largest embassy public affairs budgets in the world, sponsors numerous cultural events, including the coming New Orleans Festival, which will feature eight American bands ranging stylistically from zydeco to blues and gospel, a multi venue film festival, a photography exhibit, a culinary exchange and an EducationUSA program on studying in the United States. Minister Counselor for Public Affairs Jeffrey Sexton believes that Americans and Russians share a great love of culture. "Our programs aim to bring American culture to a Russian audience," he said. One of the highlights of his time in Moscow, he added, was a concert featuring the Carnegie Youth Symphony under the direction of renowned Russian conductor Valery Gergiev, which was "exciting for both the participants and the audience."

Entry-level officers in Moscow benefit from the experience of the senior-level managers and exposure to high-level Department visitors, important bilateral work and the interagency process. Many officers choose to return for multiple tours, such as Sexton, Counselor for Economic Affairs Doug Kramer and Minister Counselor for Political Affairs Howard Solomon. Moscow is "an exciting place for reporting work," Solomon said. "There is never a dull moment. Russia is dynamic and has changed enormously since my first visit here."

Embassy Moscow is a post that offers substantive work in a city rich with culture and history. ■





# Post of the Month



## At a Glance Russia

**Capital:** Moscow

**Government type:** Russian Federation

**Area:** 17,098,242 sq. km.

**Comparative area:** Approximately 1.8 times the size of the U.S.

**Population:** 142.5 million

**Languages:** Russian (official)

**Religions:** Russian Orthodox, other Christian and Muslim

**GDP per capita:** \$17,500

**Export partners:** Netherlands, China, Italy and Germany

**Export commodities:** Petroleum and petroleum products, natural gas, metals, wood and wood products, chemicals and a wide variety of civilian and military manufactures

**Import commodities:** Machinery, vehicles, pharmaceutical products, plastic, semi finished metal products, meat, fruits and nuts, optical and medical instruments, iron and steel

**Currency:** Russian rubles (RUB)

**Internet country code:** .ru

Source: The World Factbook



Ambassador Heffern joins those graduating from the virtual online lectures series at the Yerevan American Corner.  
 Photo by Avetik Petrosian

# Social Entrepreneurs

Embassy uses crowdfunding to help Armenians succeed

By Violeta Talandis, information officer, U.S. Embassy in Yerevan

As assistance and outreach budgets tighten, the U.S. Embassy in Yerevan is partnering with outside organizations to use social entrepreneurship and crowdfunding to help Armenia succeed as a stable, democratic and prosperous country. Non traditional partners help the embassy engage with the Armenian public. The partnerships serve as models of how citizens can effect and promote bottom-up change.

Many of the platforms that encourage such change are new in Armenia. For example, the concept of social entrepreneurship, where entrepreneurs think creatively to address social challenges, is quite nascent. Crowdfunding, in which groups of individuals network and pool their money for common causes, is underutilized. (Examples of crowdfunding include Kickstarter, for creative projects; Catapult, for women's projects; Oneacrefund, for agriculture; and Kiva, for micro-loans.) The concept of microfinance has made some inroads, but could be developed more fully.

The embassy encourages local audiences to take part in these kinds of activities and helps like-minded individuals to network. Peace Corps volunteers help the embassy connect with rural Armenian partners.

Ambassador John A. Heffern is in contact with social entrepreneurship groups, such as the Ashoka Foundation and TOMS Shoes, to help spread the concept here. Ashoka recently opened offices in the region and says it hopes to send an exploratory team to

Armenia this year. The NGO, which works closely with the Office of Global Partnerships, has benefited from the Secretary of State's Global Diaspora Forum and says it sees potential in Armenia's vast diaspora.

A budding partnership area is Armenia's archeology sector, which holds promise for creating educational and economic opportunities. The Carnegie Corporation of New York recently hosted a lunch during which the ambassador and USAID director presented opportunities to a group of diaspora leaders.

The embassy also promotes Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) at its American Corners and via a Department-sponsored MOOC camp. And it used social media to create a "flash mob" in which several hundred U.S. program alumni participated. It was one of the first events of its kind in Armenia, and the resulting YouTube clip is the most popular video on the embassy's YouTube page— attracting more than 39,000 hits to date.

Embassy Yerevan is promoting crowdfunding for social, cultural, agricultural and entrepreneurial projects. Awareness of crowdfunding platforms is still limited in Armenia, so the embassy has set up a working group to promote it, without endorsing specific platforms or projects. By introducing the embassy's smaller grant recipients to the opportunities presented by crowdfunding and microfinancing, Embassy Yerevan hopes to leverage U.S. funding to create self-sustaining opportunities for Armenian farmers, small businesses and NGOs. For instance, it combined cultural exchange,

youth empowerment and crowdfunding during a recent visit of U.S. documentary filmmakers who themselves had crowdfunded their successful film “Brooklyn Castle.” They showed the film to local audiences and held a workshop for civil society leaders on how to take advantage of these funding platforms.

The post will help train exchange program alumni on these platforms to establish counseling services on crowdfunding for local groups, and bring an expert U.S. speaker to Armenia for its “Crowdfunding Week.”

The embassy’s local employees and American staff have engaged in several outreach and social service activities. Their community service organization, Helping Hands, provides volunteer assistance on projects with schools, orphanages and sports and women’s centers. The post’s health unit staff has offered CPR and first-aid training, and embassy volunteers have helped wash windows, paint walls and do other tasks. Helping Hands has partnered with TOMS Shoes, Fuller Center for Housing and the Sistema Armenia, a music group, and embassy spouses helped establish the International Women’s Association of Yerevan, which conducts fundraisers for local service groups.

With the post’s help, Armenian children are using MIT Media Lab software to connect with American youths in a Frenzy of Friendship event celebrating 20 years of diplomatic relations. And the Art in Embassies program’s collection at the ambassador’s residence focuses on artists with special needs, including physically and mentally challenged Armenian artists. The embassy also partnered with the Foundation for the Preservation of Wildlife and Cultural Assets to display wildlife paintings by Armenian children on the outer embassy walls.

Embassy Yerevan’s mix of traditional and unconventional partnerships double American dollars, presence and impact, as the post seeks alternative ways to help Armenians transform themselves from consumers of government services to citizens who can participate in and influence change.

This may help explain why Embassy Yerevan was recently voted the most active foreign embassy in Armenia by a major local media group. ■



Above: Edmond Gevorgyan, left, shows Mrs. Heffern and Ambassador Heffern his artwork, which adorns the embassy front foyer and was organized by the Foundation for the Preservation of Wildlife NGO, one of the embassy’s nontraditional partners; Below: From left, Foreign Service Specialist Lilit Ohanyan, Ambassador Heffern and DCM Clark Price address students and NGO leaders during a crowdfunding event that was also a Web chat. Photos by Avetik Petrosian



Ambassador Heffern greets students taking part in a cross-border video conference. Photo by Avetik Petrosian



# History in Letters

Exhibition brings Holocaust story to Estonia

By Alison E. Davis, assistant public affairs officer, U.S. Embassy in Tallinn

When U.S. Holocaust scholar Dr. Jill Vexler came to Estonia in early 2013 to speak at the U.S. Embassy's request, no one knew her two-day visit would lead to a year of active collaboration and a tri-nation partnership for an exhibition on 90-year-old, Polish-born Holocaust survivor Sala Garnarcz Kirschner.

The exhibition landed Vexler on Estonia's leading evening TV news program. She told Estonia's tech-savvy viewers how Kirschner's letters and postcards, which formed the backbone of the exhibition, were the "tweets" of their day.

"A postcard is the tiniest mail that existed in the 1940s," she said. "You had to say as much as you could in a tiny space with tiny handwriting with each word selected very carefully. These letters became life for her."

Indeed, what emerges from the exhibition, based on these concise and moving letters reflecting the power of the written word, is an inspiring story of human resilience in the face of unthinkable atrocity.

"How do I say goodbye?" Kirschner wrote in her diary the day she was sent to a labor camp. "I tried to keep a smile on my face... though my eyes were filled with tears. One must go on bravely, courageously, even if the heart is breaking."

Kirschner's story is especially relevant in Estonia where, though Holocaust education is mandatory, a historically small Jewish population means that personal connections to Holocaust survivors or victims are scarce. (By contrast, almost every Estonian family has a story of a lost or imprisoned relative resulting from nearly 50 years of Soviet occupation and numerous deportations.)

However, there is a growing interest in the Holocaust chapter of Estonian history. The Klooga labor and death camp that the Nazis operated in Estonia was recently renovated with new interpretive displays. There have also been a steady stream of opinion pieces and articles in the press on the Holocaust.

Titled "Letters to Sala: A Young Woman's Life in Nazi Labor

Camps,” the exhibition is now touring Estonia, following an opening at the Museum of Occupations on Nov. 10. It is on loan from its home institution, the Galicia Jewish Museum in Kraków, Poland, and is sponsored by the French Children of the Holocaust Foundation of New York. The tour is a cooperative effort of the Museum of Occupations, the U.S. and Polish embassies in Estonia and other partners.

The exhibition draws on more than 300 letters, postcards, photographs, documents and scribbled notes that Kirschner hid, at great risk, as a prisoner in Nazi slave labor camps from the age of 16. Her collection documents life in the ghetto and labor camps, Nazi policies and torture, and the spirit of camaraderie in the women’s barracks during her imprisonment from 1940 until 1945. Revealed by Kirschner to her daughter just 20 years ago, the collection was donated to the Dorot Jewish Division of the New York Public Library in 2005. Selections from this rare archive have resulted in two traveling exhibitions of Kirschner’s story told through texts, photographs and digitized graphics of the letters.

Vexler had the idea of bringing the exhibition to Estonia when she was delivering a keynote address at Tallinn’s Museum of Occupations. During her talk, she shared Kirschner’s letters, postcards and photographs with students who had participated in a translation contest that drew on texts written by Holocaust survivors. (The contest had been organized by the embassy public affairs section and a local exchange alumnus who participated in training at the Holocaust and Human Rights Center in Augusta, Me.) The images piqued the students’ interest, and the museum’s director and curators promoted a discussion following Vexler’s presentation.

While the Occupations Museum has a substantial collection, with materials and artifacts from the Soviet and Nazi occupation periods, it lacked a biography-based exhibition like that of Kirschner’s letters. Vexler saw that Kirschner’s exhibition would fill that void.

Museum Director Kadri Viires was especially taken with the first-person aspect. “What is noteworthy is that the letters, which are from that period and the specific conditions, are the best reflection of an emotional state,” she observed. “They are exciting period documents.” She hopes the collection inspires Estonians to come forward with letters they have saved from the same period for possible future exhibitions.

The Polish Embassy in Estonia, particularly its chief of mission, Ambassador Grzegorz Marek Poznański, arranged for the exhibition to be transported from Poland and provided an interpretive specialist, Tomasz Strug, the assistant director of the Galicia Jewish Museum in Krakow. At the exhibition’s opening reception, Ambassador Poznański said Kirschner’s letters show “that even during the darkest days of humanity, it was possible to... preserve human dignity. Sala herself underlined that she survived because of her respect for other people, her constant willingness to help others and sense of humor. Therefore, this exhibition is a story of a life, a very bright life in the time of darkness.”

The exhibition was featured in a Museum of Occupations event commemorating International Holocaust Remembrance Day on Jan. 27 at which U.S. Ambassador to Estonia Jeffrey D. Levine spoke. The immense number of lives lost in the Holocaust may be hard for some to grasp, he said, but all people can come to grips with the story of one young woman and her struggle to survive.

Paired with the exhibition was another first-person narrative, in the form of a new documentary film, “Best Friends Forever.” Developed by Estonian journalist Anna Gavronski, the film focuses on four Estonian Jewish women in their 90s who have been friends since elementary school. They recount their hardships and survival in the face of the Holocaust and convey more of the story of this painful period of Estonia’s history.

Kirschner, who turned 90 on March 5, celebrated the birth of her eighth grandchild in February. She lives in New York and Florida with her husband, a U.S. Army Corporal named Sidney Kirschner, whom she met on Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, in Germany during the first September after liberation from the camps. Her story’s ability to humanize the Holocaust through the plight and survival of one young woman is a compelling focal point in the U.S. Embassy in Tallinn’s efforts to promote better understanding of this period of history in occupied Estonia, and the embassy appreciates her willingness to share it. ■

**Opposite:** Dr. Jill Vexler gives the keynote address at the exhibit’s opening at the Museum of Occupations in Tallinn.

*Photo by Filipp Mustonen*

**Below:** Ambassador Levine introduces the exhibit on International Holocaust Remembrance Day, Jan. 27, at the Museum of Occupations.

*Photo by Mairis Tuisk*



Tusks frame the setting sun in Barrow, Alaska, where temperatures were in the 60s in August 2012, 20 degrees above normal.

Photo by Julie Gourley



# Changing Arctic

## As region warms, Department prepares

By Greg O'Brien, oceans policy advisor,  
Office of Ocean and Polar Affairs

The Arctic region has experienced dramatic environmental changes over the past 30 years. Since the late 1970s, Arctic inhabitants and scientists have observed rapid reductions in snow and ice cover, with September 2012 marking the lowest sea ice extent ever recorded in modern times. Receding and deflating glaciers, thawing of the permafrost, ocean acidification and coastal erosion have also been noted. These changes have adversely affected marine mammals, fisheries, biodiversity and human populations in the Arctic.

But reduced sea ice has also created opportunities. Shipping traffic along the Northern Sea Route off Russia has increased rapidly in recent years. Exploration and development of oil and gas resources in the Chukchi, Beaufort and Barents seas are well under way and growing year after year. These economic opportunities, however, come with their own set of challenges. The Arctic remains a very fragile ecosystem, and increased pollutants from shipping and offshore oil and gas development can adversely affect the region's flora and fauna.

The Department conducts much of its multilateral Arctic diplomacy on these issues through the Arctic Council, which was established in 1996 as a high-level forum to promote cooperation among the Arctic states and indigenous peoples on sustainable development and environmental protection. The council has eight member states with land above the Arctic Circle (Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia Federation, Sweden and the United States), and six permanent participants representing indigenous groups. The member states make final decisions by consensus, but the permanent participants have real influence.

The council also includes observer states (China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Poland, South Korea, Singapore, Spain and the United Kingdom), as well as observer nongovernmental organizations and intergovernmental/inter-parliamentary organizations. The European Commission and Mongolia are seeking permanent observer status.

The council's leadership, now held by Canada, rotates every two years and will be held by the United States starting at the next Arctic Council ministerial meeting, in Canada in 2015.

Between ministerial meetings, the Senior Arctic Officials (SAOs) meet twice per year to oversee the six working groups that carry out the council's work. The U.S. SAO is Julie Gourley of the Office of Ocean and Polar Affairs (OPA) in the Bureau of Oceans and Scientific Affairs (OES). A large number of OES/OPA officers work on Arctic issues, such as maritime security, whales and marine mammal conservation, maritime boundaries, extended continental shelf delimitation and shipping rules.

Representatives from a range of U.S. executive branch departments and agencies serve on U.S. delegations to the Arctic Council's working groups, as do representatives from the State of Alaska, academia and nongovernmental organizations. OES chairs the interagency Arctic Policy Group, which coordinates U.S. positions in the Arctic Council and other Arctic activities having an international component. Several other bureaus also have important equities in the Arctic.

Probably no issue generates as much inaccurate media reporting as the process by which Arctic coastal states are establishing the outer limits of their continental shelves beyond 200 nautical miles. This is the starting point for rhetoric on a supposed "race for the Arctic" that leads many to characterize the area as on the brink of conflict.

In fact, the Law of the Sea Convention provides for an extended continental shelf (ECS) beyond 200 nautical miles from a nation's coast and exclusive sovereign rights over the natural resources on and under the shelf (including gas and oil deposits) if certain criteria are met. The convention also provides a procedure that maximizes international recognition and legal certainty regarding a country's ECS limits, including the submission of technical information to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS). Convention parties must submit their information to the CLCS within 10 years of becoming party to the convention. Canada, Norway and Russia have submitted their information, and Denmark's submission is due in 2014.

Although not yet a party to the Law of the Sea Convention, the United States is also working on its continental shelf delimitation through an interagency task force led by OES/OPA, and has been collecting data in the Arctic and elsewhere since 2002.

Increased access to the Arctic by ships and aircraft has the allure of shorter, cheaper East-West trade routes. But views differ on the freedom of navigation and overflight recognized under the law of the sea in various parts of the Arctic. The United States and several other countries view the Northwest Passage, connecting Baffin Bay in the Atlantic with the Beaufort Sea in the Arctic Ocean through the waters of the Canadian Arctic Islands, as an international strait, like the Strait of Gibraltar, through which all ships and aircraft enjoy the right of passage. Canada views the passage as internal waters with transit and overflight subject to its permission.

Canadian regulations require foreign-flag vessels to seek Canadian permission to enter and transit the waters north of its northern islands. The United States and other countries support Canada's objectives of safe navigation and preventing pollution, but have encouraged Canada to submit this regulatory scheme to the International Maritime Organization, which they see as the appropriate forum under the law of the sea.

Similarly, Russia has traditionally viewed the Northern Sea Route, the waters beyond its northern coast, as a “historically established national transport communication route.” Thus, it requires permission for ships to enter and transit the waters. The United States views these waters as a combination of international straits, territorial sea and an exclusive economic zone through which similar rights and freedoms under the law of the sea apply. Addressing these issues will become more critical as the Northern Sea Route becomes more accessible.

In May 2013, the Administration issued the National Strategy for the Arctic Region, and the strategy’s Implementation Plan was released Jan. 30. The strategy identifies U.S. priorities in the Arctic region for the next 10 years: advancing U.S. security interests, pursuing responsible Arctic region stewardship and strengthening international cooperation. The strategy also lays the foundation for future

development as new challenges and opportunities emerge. The plan guides U.S. agencies in executing the strategy and sets specific goals, next steps and timelines.

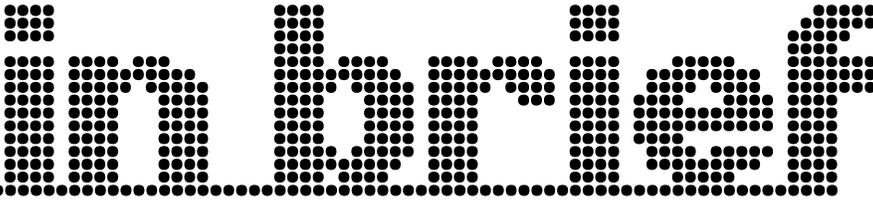
The strategy’s guiding principles are the foundation for U.S. Arctic engagement and include safeguarding peace and stability by preserving the Arctic as a region free of conflict, coordinating with Alaska natives, making decisions with the best available information and pursuing innovative arrangements to support investment in scientific research, marine transportation infrastructure and other regional needs.

The United States seeks a stable, conflict-free Arctic region where nations act responsibly in a spirit of trust and cooperation, and where economic and energy resources are managed and developed sustainably with environmental protections and respect for indigenous peoples’ way of life. ■

Reflecting global warming’s impact, a field of ice chunks lies before a Norwegian glacier from which they’ve calved.

*Photo by Julie Gourley*





A standing-room-only audience of FSI students and staff greets former Secretary of State Powell.  
*Photo by Sandra Niedzwiecki*

## Colin Powell Returns for FSI Talk

In an interview with FSI Director Nancy McEldowney, former Secretary of State Colin Powell underscored the importance of innovation, strategic perspective and leadership at every level. He drew on his experiences as National Security Advisor, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Secretary of State.

Powell visited FSI in February, where he shared his thoughts about public service and the future of diplomacy. The standing-room-only audience of FSI students and staff engaged him in a lively dialogue, posing questions ranging from how to promote diversity in the Department to how best to prepare for future foreign policy challenges facing the United States.



Consul General Ian Brownlee, left, uses a wheat-fiber-based, biodegradable take-out container in the cafeteria at the U.S. Consulate in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico.

*Photo by Patty Munoz*

## Consulate to Use Biodegradable Products

For Earth Day 2014, the Green Committee of the U.S. Consulate General in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, will use funds collected from its recycling program to purchase a limited supply of 100 percent biodegradable, wheat-fiber-based take-out containers and corn-starch-based utensils for use in the consulate's cafeteria. Wheat fiber and corn starch are renewable resources and are biodegradable, unlike petroleum-based plastic products.

The committee estimates that the cafeteria uses more than 12,000 non-biodegradable plastic containers and utensils annually. Petroleum-based plastics are the main component found in landfills and never decompose. The committee hopes to reduce the amount of plastic containers and utensils going into landfills.

The Green Committee, which has more than 30 members, has instituted a recycling program for the consulate community, obtained National Wildlife Federation wildlife habitat certification for the consulate grounds for migratory birds, participated in the community-based semi annual neighborhood clean-up, hosted a state-sponsored vehicle emissions certification site at the consulate and established a periodic electronic waste recycling program.

## Mission Promotes Malaria Awareness

After a review of Locally Employed Staff's health plan usage at the U.S. Embassy in Chad found that malaria accounted for more than 70 percent of reported illnesses, Foreign Service Health Practitioner Michael Metz and the post's health provider, Europ Assistance, proposed, designed and hosted a Malaria Awareness Day early this year for embassy staff and families.

While children were entertained with coloring books and crayons, adults visited a series of instructional stations where health professionals and embassy volunteers presented information on identifying symptoms and preventing malaria. After visiting all the stations, each employee received a long-lasting, insecticide-treated bed net for each covered family member, provided by Europ Assistance. Of the 1,450 employees and family members covered by the plan, 1,310 attended the event.

Malaria cases in Chad increased ten fold in 2013, but cases for embassy staff and families dropped by 21 percent last year, even before the post's Malaria Awareness Day. The embassy and Europ Assistance plan to hold another Health Awareness Day later this year.



Embassy N'Djamena Motor Pool Supervisor Makabdje Jacques and family members enter the Malaria Awareness Day event.

*Photo by Ali Kardas*



AMLEA members at the U.S. Mission in Cameroon gather to celebrate their group's donation.

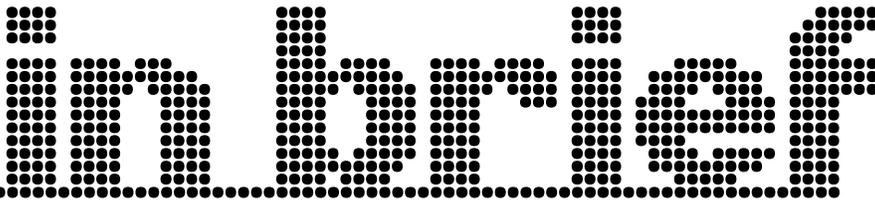
*State Department photo*

## Donation Boosts FSN Relief Fund

Following the worldwide call to replenish the Foreign Service National (FSN) Emergency Relief Fund, the American Mission Local Employees' Association (AMLEA) at the U.S. Mission in Cameroon donated more than \$2,000. This donation marks the first time since its 1983 inception that the group has contributed to the fund. AMLEA said it did so out of a sense of community spirit and moral responsibility.

Chargé d'Affaires Gregory Thome said he was impressed by the generosity and team spirit of the Locally Employed Staff community. "Yet again, the embassy family has proven that I am correct every time I say that we truly have a great team at this mission," he said. "It's an honor for me to work with such a fine group of people."

The FSN Emergency Relief Fund supports local employees affected by natural disasters, political unrest and serious injuries or death that occur in the line of duty. The fund has assisted after attacks on U.S. posts in Beirut, Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, and supported employees in Tegucigalpa, Dhaka, Santo Domingo, Niamey, Athens, Karachi, Algiers, Haiti and elsewhere.



## Marines Honored in Rome

At a Jan. 24 ceremony at the U.S. Embassy in Rome, Ambassador to Italy John R. Phillips presented two U.S. Marines with certificates of appreciation for their service. The Marines' families were able to attend after receiving a free week of lodging, meals, transportation and tours from USO Rome's sponsors and donors. Also attending the event were Ambassador to the U.N. Agencies in Rome David J. Lane, who spoke, and Ambassador to the Holy See Kenneth F. Hackett.



Photo by Patricia Zanconi

## Retirements

### Foreign Service

Accordino, Barbara R.  
 Campolongo, Peter Paul  
 Cayabyab Jr., Felipe  
 Cheatham, Linda Carol  
 Davidson, James B.  
 Delly, Daniel Purnell  
 Gray Jr., Thomas F.  
 Holmes, J. Anthony  
 Jenkinson, Kelli C.  
 Kepner, Robert Pearce  
 Kerksiek, Alice C.  
 Kerksiek, Dale A.  
 Ketterer, Keith E.  
 King, Robert W.  
 Marcouiller, Judith Anne  
 McClellan, Michael William  
 Miller, Stephen Howard  
 Passen, Andrew A.  
 Reed, Robert G.  
 Rodley, Carol

Slaughter, Sandra K.  
 Sorrell III, Willis C.  
 Wilson, Bruce C.  
 Wurdeman, Marlene D.  
 Wurdeman, Roy Alan

### Civil Service

Alvarez, Pedro Miguel  
 Anderson, Elaine  
 Andrews, Constance C.  
 Arizu, Patricia A.  
 Arnaudo, Raymond V.  
 Benton, Cheryl Ann  
 Beres, Joseph J.  
 Boncy, Virginia  
 Brumfield, Eva M.  
 Burgess, Thomas F.  
 Cabe, Gloria B.  
 Calderon, Hugo Nelson  
 Carbone, Anthony L.  
 Colon III, Pedro G.  
 Compton, David  
 Dale, Lorraine  
 Dinsmore Blanchard, Celia E.  
 Dubose, Steven D.  
 Duncan, Johnnie I.  
 Freeman, Marlene L.

Fritch, Kenneth W.  
 Gaspi, Maureen J.  
 Glistler, John R.  
 Herrod, Gary L.  
 Herschler, David H.  
 Hunter Sr., Donald S.  
 Ingram Jr., Henry D.  
 Jackson, Valerie B.  
 Justice, Delores  
 Keenan, Candace S.  
 Kerig, Jay E.  
 Lane, Gerda  
 Lassiter, Marilyn A.  
 Leopold, Andrea M.  
 Limberg, Wayne P.  
 Mack, Diann  
 Marinos, Harry N.  
 McCleary, Betsy A.  
 McCree, Mary A.  
 Morgan III, James A.

Nelson, Marketta M.  
 Powell, Harold  
 Rayburn, Dorothy J.  
 Romalewski, Robert S.  
 Rush, Jeraldine H.  
 Santiago, Mirtha P.  
 Stewart, Joan E.  
 Stout, Nancy Ann  
 Urbanczyk, Audrey F.  
 Vore, Eric Charles  
 Washington, Vanessa D.  
 Whatley, Robert  
 Wilson, Tod  
 Wissman Jr., Robert B.  
 Wright, Martha A. Graves  
 Zangrillo, Joanne T.  
 Ziehm, Donald S.

## Ethics Answers

**Q:** I know ethics rules prohibit me from working on a matter involving or affecting a financial interest, but I also know there is an exemption for investments in securities below \$15,000. I have a \$10,000 interest in a company that is publicly traded on the London Stock Exchange. Does this interest qualify for the exemption?

**A:** Probably not. To qualify for the regulatory exemption, the security must be traded on a U.S. stock exchange. Unless your security is also traded on a U.S. stock exchange, it will not qualify for an exemption. Even if it is traded on a U.S. stock exchange, the exemption is not guaranteed. If you own more than \$50,000 worth of stocks in a particular economic sector, you may not participate in a matter that would affect that sector, even if no individual stock interest exceeds \$15,000.

LYING IN STATE: CHIEF OF MIRTH AUTHORITY!

DIPLOMACY DOESN'T HAVE TO BE DRY, PEOPLE - WHY DOESN'T ANYONE AT THIS EMBASSY HAVE A SENSE OF HUMOR?



AMBASSADOR, WE'LL FORM A FUNNINESS WORKING GROUP TO ENCOURAGE MORE ROBUST AND FORWARD-LEARNING HILARITY!

FIFTY PERCENT MORE MIRTH MANDATED FOR EACH SECTION!



ALL JOES AND WITTICISMS WOULD HAVE TO BE CLEARED, OF COURSE.

FUNNY SOUNDS, TOO...



WE COULD REQUIRE THE DUTY OFFICER TO WEAR HIS UNDERPANTS ON THE OUTSIDE - THAT WOULD BE DROLL...

WHOOPE CUSHIONS AT COUNTRY TEAM MEETINGS?



JUST PUT OUT AN ADMIN NOTICE THAT MERITORIOUS MIRTHFULNESS WILL BE CONSIDERED FAVORABLY FOR PROMOTION.



SOMETIMES I'M SO GOOD I SCARE MYSELF...



# Appointments

## Heather Higginbottom

Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources



## Daniel B. Smith

Assistant Secretary for Intelligence and Research



## Tina Kaidanow

Coordinator for Counterterrorism



## Catherine A. Novelli

Under Secretary for Economic Growth, Energy and the Environment



## Sarah Sewall

Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights



## Anne W. Patterson

Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs



## Charles H. Rivkin

Assistant Secretary for Economic and Business Affairs



**Heather Higginbottom** of the District of Columbia is the new Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources. Previously, she was counselor to the Secretary. Before that, she was deputy director of the Office of Management and Budget and counselor to the OMB director. She also served as deputy director of the White House Domestic Policy Council, policy director for then-Senator Barack Obama's presidential campaign and legislative director for then-Senator John Kerry.

**Tina Kaidanow (SFS)** of the District of Columbia is the new Coordinator for Counterterrorism, with the rank of Ambassador at Large. Previously, she was deputy ambassador in Kabul. Before that, she was principal deputy assistant secretary in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. She was the first U.S. ambassador to Kosovo and deputy chief of mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Earlier, she served in Skopje, Sarajevo and Belgrade.

**Catherine A. Novelli** of Virginia is the new Under Secretary for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment. Previously, she was vice president of Worldwide Government Affairs at Apple, Inc. Before that, she was a partner in the Washington office of Mayer, Brown, Rowe & Maw LLP, where she worked on international trade and investment issues. She also served as assistant U.S. trade representative for Europe and the Mediterranean.

**Anne W. Patterson (SFS)** of Virginia is the new Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs. Previously, she was ambassador to Egypt and before that, ambassador to Pakistan. She has also served as assistant secretary for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, deputy permanent representative at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations, deputy inspector general and ambassador to Colombia and El Salvador.

**Charles H. Rivkin** of the District of Columbia is the new Assistant Secretary for Economic and Business Affairs. Previously, he was ambassador to France and Monaco. Before that, he was president and CEO of award-winning entertainment companies such as The Jim Henson Company and Wildbrain. He was named one of the 100 Most Creative People in Business by *Fast Company*.

**Sarah Sewall** of Massachusetts is the new Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights. She serves concurrently as Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues. Previously, she was a senior lecturer in public policy at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. She has also been director of Harvard's Carr Center for Human Rights Policy and director of the National Security and Human Rights Program at the Kennedy School.

**Daniel B. Smith (SFS)** of Virginia is the new Assistant Secretary for Intelligence and Research. Previously, he was ambassador to Greece. Before that, he was executive secretary of the Department. He has also been principal deputy assistant secretary for Consular Affairs and deputy executive secretary. His earlier overseas postings include Bern, Istanbul, Ottawa and Stockholm.

# Obituaries



**Nancy L. Beck**, 63, a retired Civil Service employee, died Jan. 24. She lived in Annapolis, Md. She served in the White House press office for two years and then in the State Department press office for more than 30 years. After retiring, she returned to her hometown of Annapolis.



**Peter W. Colm**, 90, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Jan. 5 in Graham, N.C. He served in the Army during World War II and joined the Department in 1949. He specialized in China, the Far East and Sino-Soviet relations. His overseas postings included Taipei and Hong Kong. After retiring to Lusby, Md., he enjoyed kayaking and crabbing before moving to North Carolina in 2010.



**Jonathan Dean**, 89, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Jan. 14 of congestive heart failure at his home in Mesa, Ariz. He served as a combat infantryman in World War II and joined the Department in 1949. His postings included Limburg, Bonn, Elizabethville, Prague and Vienna (NATO-Warsaw Pact force reduction negotiations). After retiring, he joined the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and was arms control advisor to the Union of Concerned Scientists. He loved Vienna opera, accordion playing and rose growing.



**Victor H. Dikeos**, 90, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Jan. 14 of cancer in Pasadena, Calif. He served in the Navy before joining the Department in 1954. His postings included Hong Kong, Manila, Warsaw, Beirut, Mexico City and Panama City. Shortly after retiring to Hilton Head, S.C., in 1980, he joined the Sinai peacekeeping force, the Multinational Force and Observers, and later became its director general. He then returned to Hilton Head, before moving to Pasadena. He was known for his quick wit.



**William H. Hurst**, 88, a retired Foreign Service reserve officer, died Jan. 16. He lived in coastal South Carolina. He served in the Army Air Forces during World War II and then worked for the federal government for 34 years, including 18 at the State Department. He was an attorney advisor, branch chief in the Passport Office and consular officer in Frankfurt. After retiring in 1980, he briefly practiced law and published a book of poems.



**Helen M. Kotzem**, 93, a retired Foreign Service employee, died Jan. 31 of natural causes in Tallahassee, Fla. During her 42 years with the federal government, she worked for Eleanor Roosevelt; USAID, in Tripoli; and the State Department, primarily at the Foreign Service Institute. After retiring in 1983, she moved to Arlington, Va., and then to Tallahassee. She was active in the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association.



**Charles G. Moore**, 76, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Dec. 15. He lived in Sewickley, Pa. He served in the Air Force before joining the Foreign Service. His postings included Saigon, Tegucigalpa, Belgrade, New Delhi, San Salvador, Manila, Warsaw, Islamabad, Geneva and Bonn. He enjoyed traveling and playing golf and tennis.



**Marie-Luise H. Murphy**, 75, wife of retired Foreign Service communications programs officer Thomas J. Murphy, died Jan. 17 in Gainesville, Fla., following a brief illness. She accompanied her husband to postings in London, Algiers, Lisbon, Port-au-Prince, Canberra, Bonn, San José, Geneva, Brussels and Ottawa. She worked for the Federal Emergency Management Agency and, while abroad, for the Family Liaison Office. She was an interior decorator, and loved music and gardening.



**Norris P. Smith**, 84, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Feb. 5 of liver cancer in Wallingford, Conn. He served in the Air Force before joining the Foreign Service. His postings included Laos, Vietnam, Thailand, Japan and China. After retiring, he worked for the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. He also founded and edited a magazine and wrote a book dealing with supercomputers.



**Walter A. Weber**, 90, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Jan. 10 in San Dimas, Calif. He served in the Army during World War II and joined the Department in 1953. His postings included San Salvador, Stuttgart, Jerusalem, La Paz, Monrovia, Nassau, Niamey, Saigon, Tijuana, Beirut and Vientiane. He retired to Chula Vista, Calif. He was an avid tennis player and reader.

Questions concerning employee deaths should be directed to the Office of Casualty Assistance at (202) 736-4302. Inquiries concerning deaths of retired employees should be directed to the Office of Retirement at (202) 261-8960. For specific questions on submitting an obituary, please contact Bill Palmer at [palmerwr2@state.gov](mailto:palmerwr2@state.gov) or (202) 203-7114. ■

# End State



## Puerto Rico

A man and woman stroll down an alleyway lined with vibrantly painted buildings in Old San Juan.

*Photo by Emilio J. Santacoloma*



## Estonia

A bounty of ripe, red apples signifies the changing season in Tartu County, Estonia.

*Photo by Axiraa - Busy*

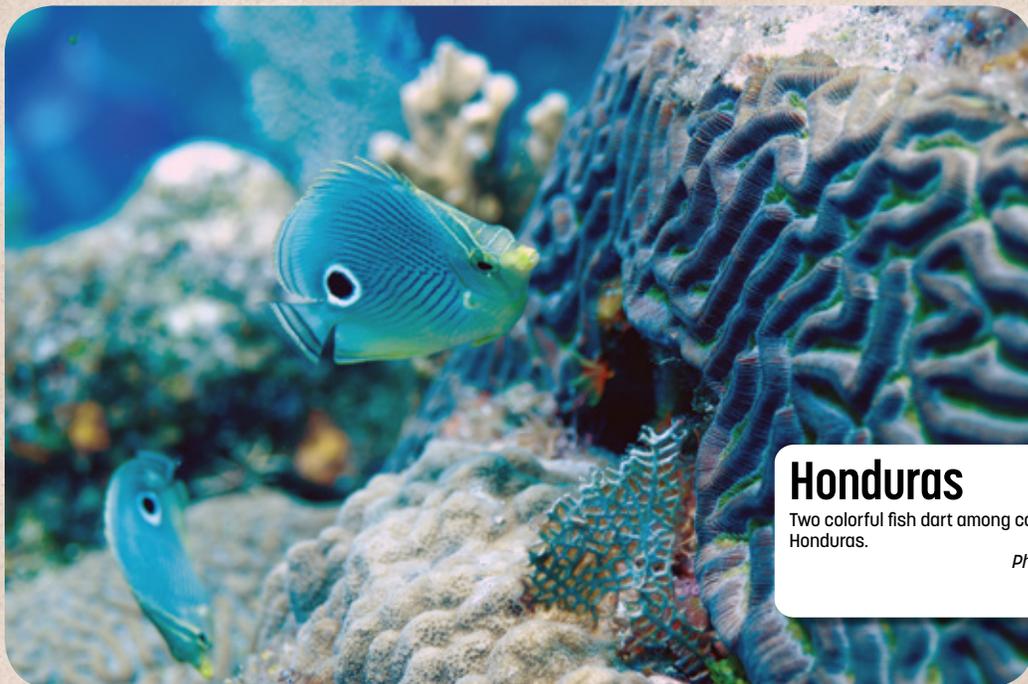




# Canada

A late October sunrise illuminates McIntyre Creek as it spills into the Yukon River near downtown Whitehorse.

*Photo by Keith Williams*



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# Honduras

Two colorful fish dart among coral formations in the waters off Honduras.

*Photo by actor212*





U.S. Department of State  
Bureau of Human Resources  
Washington, DC 20520

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## Take Your Child to Work Day - April 24!

The Department invites employees to bring their children ages 9-15 to this popular, educational event, which features fun activities and a chance for kids to see where their parents work. Stay tuned for the upcoming Department Notice with registration details.